TRAINING FOR LIFE

EDWARD F. GARESCHE S.J.

Training for Life

By
Edward F. Garesché, S.J.
M.A., LL.B.

ALMA COLLEGE
242.2
LIBRARY
G179
Alma, California

New York
P. J. Kenedy & Sons
1926

44112

Imprimi Potest:
Very Rev. MATTHEW GERMING, S. J.
Præpositus Prov. Missourianæ

Nihil Obstat:
ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur:
✠ PATRICK CARDINAL HAYES
Archbishop, New York

NEW YORK
die 29 Octobris, 1926

COPYRIGHT, 1926
P. J. KENEDY & SONS
PRINTED IN U. S. A.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Importance of Training for Life	3
II.	The Training of Character	15
III.	Orienting the Pupil for Life	28
IV.	Training Students to Choose	41
V.	Two Modes of Influence	53
VI.	Doing Too Much for Them	65
VII.	Drifting with the Current	76
VIII.	The Worth of Catholic Culture	88
IX.	A Taste for Good Reading	100
X.	Helping Vocations for Teaching	112
XI.	Why Are There Not More Vocations?	124
XII.	The Call of God and the Call of the World	135

Preface

This little book is intended to give some helpful thoughts on a subject which is full of interest and importance to our teachers. The first nine chapters deal with topics which concern the training of all children, whether they are destined to remain in the world or are called to religion, or to the priesthood. In the last three chapters we have touched on a subject which is of special interest and importance at this time, the development of a religious vocation.

If the thoughts we have here set down prove interesting and helpful to our devoted teachers, this volume will have achieved its purpose.

Training for Life

Training for Life

I

The Importance of Training for Life

THE devoted teacher, occupied with the details of the class room, obliged to keep pace with the many demands on her time, is required from the nature of the case, to live much in the present hour. Teaching is one of the most engrossing of all occupations. St. Augustine's saying is here, of course, eminently true, "where there is love, there is no labor, or if there be labor, the labor is loved." Still, even labor which is loved wearies the body and the brain and leaves the teacher little time to look beyond the years and to foresee the result of her endeavors.

Yet it is good, at times, for the teacher to glance forward and conjecture what will be

the fruit of the seed she is wearilessly sowing in young minds and young hearts day by day. All teaching is an investment in the future. The importance of teaching and its dignity depend on the fact that it is a preparation for life. Fleeting and insignificant as every hour of the class room may seem in itself, each, as it passes, is leaving upon the child an impression never to be effaced. For time and eternity the character of the pupil will bear the marks of this gentle, hourly chiselling. Only in after years will the results of the teacher's labors truly come to light.

When Michelangelo, at the Pope's bidding, undertook the adornment of the Sistine chapel, he shut himself up in solitude and day after day the attendants at the Vatican saw him enter in the morning and lose himself in the intricacies of the scaffoldings until evening. Day after day, week after week, for months and years, he labored obscurely with no one to admire, no one to criticise or praise his work or even to behold it. Again and again, the Pope inquired eagerly, "When will you make an end? When will you make an end?" Only to receive time and again the same reply,

"When I am able." It was only after years of obscure labor, struggling with stubborn colors, striving with lights and shadows, that the master cleared away his scaffolding and bade Rome enter in and admire the greatest effort of the painter's genius, the matured results of years of patient toil.

In some similar way the teacher, entering the morning class room only to leave it when the day is far advanced, works obscurely, with no one to see or to admire. Her work is done upon a canvas invisible to human gaze. The slow results of her patience manifest themselves little by little. It is only when the work is finished, when the child leaves school and enters into life, when the scaffolding of school days is cleared away and crowding interests enter in to take the place of lessons and studies, that the teacher's work becomes manifest. During these quiet moments in the class room, she has been training the child for life.

How much of the achievements of after days are to be credited to these hidden labors of the teacher! We have tried to express this truth in some verses published not long ago which we crave pardon for repeating here,

since they illustrate this reflection. They have to do with the Catholic teacher in her school room, the Sister who has devoted her life to the instruction of children:

"Gentle among her ruddy flock she stands,
Their dewy faces sleepy as the morn,
Fresh as the summer flowers in the corn,
Sweet as the daisies on the meadow-lands.
And droning like a hive of honey bees
They con their tasks, that smiling nun to please,—
She holds their little hearts within her hands.
And she, for Christ's dear love her tasks pursuing—
Love craveth labor though the task be sore,—
Some tender deed forever will be doing
To make them love her Jesus more and more.
With patient eyes she scans their candid faces,
She sees not far beyond their childish graces.
Nor recks the cost nor counts the gain ensuing.
Yet yon light lad a bishop God will make,
To rule a people with the love she gave,

Yon laughing lass will go for Jesus' sake
To toil in heathen lands, love's willing slave.
Thus, teaching day by day the ruddy rows,
She sows the seed, nor knoweth what she sows,—
In distant years the billowy harvests wake."

These are surely consoling and encouraging reflections for the teacher who finds the labor of the class room fatiguing, (as who does not?) and who feels discouraged over the little results visible from her endeavors. The reaping comes long after the sowing and only experience can tell us that the weary toil of digging the ground and preparing it, of casting in the seed and cultivating the earth, will result in a full-fruited harvest. Yet such is the case, and the richness of the yield will repay for the weary days of seed-time.

There is, however, another aspect of teaching, even more worthy of consideration, but not quite so consoling. If it be true, and it is, that much of the good of after-life has its origin in the training of the class room, it is equally true that later deficiencies and shortcomings are also, in some measure, due to the

defects of class room training. We must take the bitter with the sweet. Nothing human is quite perfect and it is no wonder that our Catholic teachers, while accomplishing so much for the good of their pupils, can still find faults in their work. It is precisely these deficiencies which will show themselves for the worse in the after life of the pupil, just as the excellencies of teaching manifest themselves in good results.

It is sometimes difficult for the teacher herself to recognize these shortcomings. When one is very near to a work, one sometimes fails to perceive defects which a more distant survey will reveal. It will be interesting then, and helpful for our teachers to point out some needs which still remain to be supplied in our general system of teaching. These remarks are meant, not as criticism nor fault finding, but rather to suggest ways of making a good system better and rounding out a training already so excellent.

During the great war, the present writer had occasion to visit a number of the camps, sometimes to give a Mission, sometimes to address a gathering of the soldiers, and he was

often impressed by the extraordinary opportunity given by the assembling of so many Catholic young men in these cantonments to survey and appreciate their characteristic good qualities. The remarks of the chaplains who were brought into such intimate contact with the men, were particularly illuminating. At one of the greatest of the camps, the chaplain said to me, "The graduates of the parish schools, whom we get here by the thousands, are the greatest monuments to our teaching Sisters that ever could be. I can tell," he continued, "as soon as a boy gets to camp, whether he has been in the hands of the Sisters, or no. If he has, he is friendly and respectful to the priests, he comes and offers to serve Mass, he shows a pride in his faith, and it is easy to get him to come often to the Sacraments. But too many of the boys who have had no such opportunities are ashamed of their religion, or at least ignorant of it. They keep away from the chaplain. They are embarrassed if asked to serve Mass or Benediction. Here in camp we see," he concluded, "the influence of our parish schools."

It is easy to realize how these traits in the

former pupils of parish schools come directly from the influence of their teachers. If those same former pupils do not possess the other desirable qualities which we are about to mention, we do not mean to infer that it is for want of the corresponding virtues in their teachers. Rather it may be because not enough provision is made in our present system to convey to the pupils what their teachers possess in these regards.

Let us take, first of all, the spirit of active self-sacrifice for the benefit of Catholic organizations and activities. It is quite clear that one of the most characteristic virtues of Catholic teachers is precisely their spirit of self-sacrifice and zeal. Yet one often hears the observation that Catholic lay folk are not as ready as might be expected to take up their part of the new burdens of the Church in the way of organized activities. It is hard at times to find leaders for Catholic enterprises. The spirit of self-sacrifice, even among the graduates of Catholic schools, leaves something to be desired.

Now here is a point which should give Catholic teachers occasion for some very ser-

ious thought. Respect for the priests and willingness to attend Mass and frequent the Sacraments are virtues which the children take by a kind of holy contagion from their teachers. The very spirit of reverence and faith of the teacher communicates itself to her charges. In regard to self-sacrifice, and zeal, the case is however, not the same. Strange as it may seem, the very self-devotion of the teacher may beget in the children a certain selfishness, and unless some special means are used to train them to self-sacrifice, they may be spoiled by the very care and devotion which are lavished upon them.

We sometimes see the mother of a family who is so serviceable and self-sacrificing that she actually harms her children. She does everything for them and demands nothing in return and in consequence they come to consider themselves entitled to every care and independent of every responsibility. This is cruel kindness. Our poor human nature is so constituted that it will grow selfish by indulgence and needs the tonic of discipline to make it unselfish and thoughtful of others. Now it is possible for a Catholic teacher to

make the same mistake as does the over-generous mother of a family and to do too much for her pupils while demanding too little from them in the way of personal self-sacrifice. Nor do we speak here of lessons merely. We have in mind also those small exercises in self-denial and generosity possible even to children in the lower grades, like work for the Missions, interest in the poor, efforts for Catholic literature and other altruistic exercises which we shall dwell on later on.

Some teachers may be inclined to make light of such little exercises of self-denial and to think it is not worth all the trouble it takes to get children to practice themselves in the small and trifling good works which are all that they can do in behalf of others. But these teachers, if such there be, surely fail to realize the great results in after life of this early training. Queen Blanche of Castile used to take her little son, Louis, and fill his hands with alms for the poor, so that he might himself give largess to the afflicted and learn in his tender years the virtue of charity which shone so brilliantly in his after life. So many other wise mothers of saints have laid the foundation of great holi-

ness in their children by training them in their tender years to works of personal charity.

If we may descend from these exalted examples to a somewhat humorous comparison, we shall recall what a Missionary to Alaska once related about the training of the hardy Eskimo dogs who can each drag his hundred pounds weight at a lively clip for many hours a day over the rough snow. When these dogs are little puppies, so the Missionary said, the drivers tie about their necks with a thong a small bit of ice or bone which the puppies have to drag about with them wherever they run. As they grow larger, the burden is increased and so they become used to carrying always a load. When they are full-grown and put in harness the muscles developed by their constant dragging of a burden stand them in good stead during long travels over the trails.

It is hardly necessary to apply this comparison. If the little puppies, instead of being taught betimes to carry a burden, were cuddled always in their master's arms and saved the trouble of walking, they would grow up quite unfit for dragging a sledge. The master, if he were tender-hearted, might find much more

pleasure in carrying them about, than in making them learn to walk themselves and to pull a weight besides. But weights must be pulled and burdens borne and there is no time like puppyhood for giving good habits betimes. It is not so much what is done in their behalf as what they do for themselves that teaches the young to carry the loads of after years.

II

The Training of Character

A THOUGHTFUL and experienced friend of mine, discoursing recently of the effects of Catholic education, made some pregnant observations. "Giving due credit" he said, "for all the excellences of our Catholic education, and they are many, still it does seem as though not quite enough were always done to train the children to personal and consistent fidelity to the practice of their religion. And by the practice of their religion," he continued, "I do not mean only the reception of the Sacraments, once a year, and weekly Mass and Friday Abstinence. I mean the living up to Catholic principles in every day existence, the letting shine before the world the light of a Catholic example.

"May not the reason for the falling off of too many Catholic pupils from a fervent Catholic life be found in the circumstance that their training at school has too much to do with

exterior discipline, is too much based, to use a current phrase, on the 'herd instinct' and does not endeavor enough to train the individual's character.

"The great ideas which the Catholic child should take away from school" he went on, "are first the personal conviction that the faith he has learnt at school is the most precious possession he can have on earth, worth more than all the touring cars and luxurious homes in the world. Secondly, our Catholic students should gain at school a personal and lifelong conviction that no matter what happens they must walk in the way of the commandments, even though all their chums should choose to follow an easier path and to lose their souls. Finally, they should learn to do the right thing because it is right, and to avoid the wrong action because it is wrong no matter how many are against them. It is this training of the conscience to stand by what is right that is worth more than all the secular graces and learning which the school can give."

Here is matter for interesting and profitable thought, surely on the part of Catholic educators. We know very well how consoling, in

many instances, are the results of the training in our schools. We count among our graduates enough fervent Catholic men and women to justify many times over all the effort and sacrifice required to establish and maintain them. But it is the defections and apostacies among our pupils that give us cause for thought and scrutiny. Though we are doing well at present, still the number of former pupils of Catholic schools, who fall away and prove recreant to the principles taught them, ought to urge us to still greater efforts to make our system of training yet more effective to fortify and safeguard our graduates.

When one considers the general characteristics of our Catholic laity, one finds in them a great deal of living faith and devotion which must be credited in all honesty to the influence exercised upon them while at school. They have a respect for the priesthood which is the direct result of the Sisters' training. They discharge the obligations laid on them by the Church of Sunday Mass and Friday Abstinence. Many are even fervent in receiving Communion frequently and attending services and devotions. But, taking them by and large,

they read few Catholic books, take little interest in Catholic culture, and show sometimes a singular poverty of initiative and leadership in parish societies and even in Catholic organizations generally. Too large a number, one would fear, fail to withstand the temptations that meet them after graduation. The young folk, drifting about as they will from place to place, too often allow themselves to get out of all touch with Catholic influences. A sad proportion of them, whether through mixed marriages or other occasions, fall away from the Faith. Can we, by careful analysis, discover what may be lacking in our system that might enable us to train these children in a more effective way for life?

It is pretty clear that one reason for the lack of personal initiative and even personal fidelity in Catholic activities on the part of some of our pupils, is to be found in what our thoughtful friend has called in current phrase, "the herd spirit", which is likely to creep into any school and therefore also into Catholic schools. It is the spirit of doing things because "everyone is doing them", of following the crowd withersoever it goes, of drifting along with the

greatest number without much personal choice or resistance, as sheep walk in a flock or as cattle run in a herd. "Everybody does it" is the conscious or unconscious principle on which this flocking proceeds. "Where the crowd goes, I go also, where the flock trots, there trot I." Such a procedure brings about, indeed, exterior order and conformity, but it does not tend to train to those principles of individual choice, initiative and resistance which are so important for a good and happy life after school days are over.

If the experienced teacher, in the midst of her work, will look about her and see how large a share this herd spirit has in the lives of her pupils, she will realize why, in after-life, they fail to show all the independent courage of their convictions, all the initiative and activity in Catholic enterprises which she would desire. Their training often prepares them rather to do as everyone is doing and to follow the crowd than to stand out individually for principle or to take the lead and direct activities and enterprises.

Conformity, order, regularity, discipline, are essentials in the school. But none of

these things in themselves cultivate personal initiative or personal interest in culture. In a large class, where much work has to be done, the tendency of the teacher will be to reduce all the pupils to a sort of common denominator, to keep them in a passive attitude, to make each do what the rest are doing. In other words, there will be a temptation to subdue personal differences and make the children act like a flock or a herd. General conformity to discipline is of course necessary in the schoolroom. But it is possible to introduce into our school system some counterbalancing features and exercises which will offset the repression of individuality and will cultivate the valuable and indispensable qualities of personal choice, resistance, and initiative.

We have suggested, time and again, that the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, rightly conducted, might readily be used as a means for this individual training of the pupils. The Sodality calls for initiative, self-sacrifice, and personal fervor on the part of its officers and members. By taking the trouble personally to instruct and encourage the officers and members and by giving them the opportunity to ex-

ercise themselves in Sodality work, the school authorities could offset in large measure the tendency of scholastic exercises to cultivate the herd spirit. But as matters now stand, the Sodality is often among the most neglected of school influences. Such activities as exist are largely reduced to compulsory attendance at meetings and the holding of devotional exercises, both of which, though excellent in themselves, tend from our present viewpoint rather to cultivate the habit of "doing as others do" than to counteract it.

The same may be said of other activities in the school which might be made the occasion of cultivating personal initiative. The teacher, already burdened, it may be, with too many cares, finds that it is easier to do things himself or herself than to get the pupils to do them. But in doing everything one's self, one deprives the children of many opportunities to exercise initiative and zeal. Thus when the school societies undertake some activity, it is the teacher in charge of them who does most of the planning, who supplies most of the energy. This is simpler and quicker to be sure than first to instruct and stimulate the officers

and then to superintend their work. "It's so much trouble to get them to do things in the way they should be done, that I find it easier just to do them myself." How many, many times this has been the principle, expressed or implied, which has guided the teachers who have been charged with responsibility for their scholars' activities.

One may make the same observation about the conduct of classes. It is easier for the teacher to reduce everything to such a system that the pupils become almost automatons, moved and guided by the will of another. This produces beautiful order and discipline, but does it train to any degree of personal initiative and responsibility on the part of the pupil? The class which lives and breathes at a signal from the teacher, which is lost when she is out of sight, and does everything on her signal, is certainly not being trained to individual initiative. Here again, discipline is necessary and order indispensable. But the teacher should deliberately look out for opportunities of putting the students on their own mettle and of cultivating in them habits of personal fidelity and fervor.

One may find opportunities of doing this without disturbing discipline or materially affecting the good order of the class. At any event, even where the teacher finds it impossible to depart from invariable routine in class, she may at least take measures outside of class to train her pupils to initiative and personal self-sacrifice. She may induce them to take up works of zeal on their own account, to join sections of the Sodality, to set on foot class activities which the officers of the class will really manage and direct. Let them make mistakes. Let them find out by hard experience the right ways of doing things. The temporary disadvantages which may come to their activities if the teacher keeps her hands off and allows them to manage things, will be far more than made up for by the training in personal initiative given the pupils.

The same principle may be applied in getting the pupils to take an active interest in their personal culture. Experience has shown only too clearly that boys and girls who while at school have been the object of the most conscientious instruction on good reading and personal culture will, as soon as they leave school,

cast these things to the winds. While at school they were made to read books, to study them, to write compositions on them, but they did all this as part of a flock because everybody did it, because it would go hard for you if you did not. This begot in the pupil no personal enthusiasm whatsoever for good reading or culture; and once outside school, perceiving that no one else was reading Catholic books, nor taking much interest in culture generally, the pupil, trained to do as everybody does, proceeds quite logically to carry out that training.

The remark is often made that obliging all the children to go to Mass each day has a bad effect afterwards; because they go by compulsion and fail to cultivate any personal fervor for attending Mass. We may have something to say on this subject hereafter, but certainly attendance at Mass should be something more than a flocking to chapel without individual desire or personal will. It is not so much the compulsion nor the collective exercise of attending Mass which, in most instances, reacts unfavorably on after life; it is the making of the going to Mass a mere manifestation of the "herd spirit"—doing a holy action not for the

sake of the holy action, but because "everybody does it" and because it is easier to go with the crowd than to stay away.

Routine, the doing of things not loved nor esteemed in themselves but imposed by custom, discipline, the force of public opinion, is an enemy to personal fervor, personal initiative, the inward spirit of fidelity to duty. Now a goodly proportion of routine is almost inevitable in school, where so many of differing tastes and characters have to be kept in order, guided, instructed, and formed after some uniform measure and pattern. All the more reason then for insisting that all the teachers and especially those who are more particularly responsible for the training of the students for life, should take definite measures to counteract the influence of routine and to supply an effective training for the career that will open to the pupils after school is over.

It is not an easy task thus to cultivate the personal initiative and spiritual energy of the student. It requires, on the part of the teacher, a degree of observation of character and ingeniousness in inventing methods, a persuasiveness and leadership which will induce the

pupils to co-operate in their own personal training for after-life. When this is added to the already great labor of teaching, it becomes a serious burden on the teacher's energy and patience. Yet, it is worth while to make all the effort required of the extraordinary value of the achievement.

In the years that follow school, much of the actual instruction that is now given the pupils will necessarily fade from their minds. The outlines of many subjects will grow vague with the passage of years. Life, with ruthless touch, will blur and obliterate many facts, impressions, instructions which the teacher now imparts with anxious care.

But the character of the pupil, the personal enthusiasm for and love of the Faith, the spirit of conscientious fidelity to duty, the courage to resist evil, the fervor for culture, goodness, the habit of initiative, the willingness to make sacrifice for Catholic causes, to give service to others, to persevere in the exercise of Catholic principles—these things once deeply planted, will grow stronger with time. Much knowledge is, after all, given to be forgotten. But the training of character, the real train-

ing for life which will bring with it growing culture and added nobility through the years this is the noblest and most precious as it is also the more lasting fruit of Catholic education.

III

Orienting the Pupil for Life

RELIGIOUS teachers have certain splendid advantages in the matter of educational work. They can concentrate on their task in a way that must stir the envy of secular educators who are obliged to suffer the distractions of social life which sometimes greatly interfere with their studious propensities. They can besides, exert on their pupils a strong religious and moral influence because of their own complete devotion to the religious life and to the loftiest principles. We should certainly be grateful for these singular advantages. But at the same time we ought squarely to face and realize, so as to counteract and overcome them, certain essential disadvantages which spring also from the nature of the religious life.

There is an old saying that even a good man has sometimes the disadvantages of his good qualities. Human nature is so limited

that even a virtue carried to a great degree will sometimes bring with it accompanying deficiencies. True, the virtue is far more precious than the deficiencies are harmful. But for all that, the wise man will try to allow for his own defects even when they are the result of good qualities. Thus a man who is a marvel of order and regularity sometimes falls into a rigidity of conduct which makes him inefficient because he is inflexible. Another individual, whose humility is great, becomes so forgetful of self as to injure health and efficiency. So we may run the gamut of the virtues and find in many of them a danger if one goes too far on the right side and does not take pains to counteract the defects of his good qualities.

We may dare to say that the same is true of some religious teachers. They also suffer from a lack of perfect balance. They emphasize and insist on a good attitude or a worthy principle to the exclusion of other practical considerations. In dealing with their pupils one can sometimes see where the teacher has failed to develop an important element of

character while insisting admirably on other elements.

Thus, to take a concrete instance, the pupils of our Catholic schools are invariably trained to obedience and submissiveness. They profit by this training, of course, in various degrees. But the discipline is always given them. This is as it should be, because discipline and obedience and the habit of submissiveness to authority are of prime importance both in school and after-life. But do our Catholic teachers take equal care to stir up in the pupil that personal self-reliance, that initiative and ambition which ought always to go with obedience? In after-life, whether the pupil enters religion or remains in the world, his personal value and efficiency will depend quite as much on his habit of energetic personal effort and initiative as on his habit of obedience. To orient the pupil for life it is necessary that the teacher should keep constantly in mind the need of developing personal character so as to make her pupils, as far as possible, strong, well-balanced, self-reliant men and women.

Yet it is the latter element of character which is most difficult to train. It is much

more usual, in fact, for a religious teacher to inculcate obedience than to develop initiative. Submissiveness can be taught *en masse* to hundreds of people at a time. They may be trained, as we have noted in another article, "from without inwards" instead of "from within outwards." They may be taught to do what they are told merely because of exterior pressure, the will of the teacher, the fear of her punishments, the general example of others, and so on. But initiative, self-reliance, personal ambition, are things which have to be developed in individuals and cannot, so to say, be taught wholesale. It is endlessly easier for the teacher in general and for the religious teacher in particular to dominate, subdue, and discipline the class than it is to develop the character of the individual pupil.

Yet for after-life this training to personal reliance and rightful ambition is altogether essential. If the pupil goes out into the world used only to do what he is told, to act with the crowd, to conform to custom, that pupil is ill-prepared for the personal struggle, the definite resistance, the individual aspirations necessary to make him a success as a Catholic.

A good life is always a struggle, but particularly so in our time when to act with the crowd to conform to public morality or rather immorality, to do what everybody does is to depart from Catholic principle. We must put resistance into our pupils if we are to keep them faithful to our teaching.

This aspect of education sometimes fails to receive its full meed of attention and effort from the religious teacher because it is not brought home to him nor her so vividly by personal experience. The religious life is to a certain degree sheltered from the fiery blast of temptation which threatens to shrivel the souls of those who live in the world. Some religious teachers have, fortunately for themselves, been preserved by their early and generous renunciation from any experience of life's real wickedness and temptations. They can hardly visualize to themselves what alluring incitements, what bad example, what pressure of corrupt public opinion will be brought to bear on their pupils after school. If they could follow the girls and boys who leave their classes at graduation out into the troubled world, and see how the world and the flesh

and the devil hunt for their souls, they would make the work of the class room a deliberate effort to orient these innocent young folk for life, to steel them against temptation, to bring out every ounce of resistance which is dormant in their character and send them out from school fighters and champions of the right, not merely docile pupils who know nothing of the struggle before them.

It is true that such a preparation for life imposes extra burdens on the already over-taxed teacher. Yet, it is this definite preparation for life which puts a crown on all educational work. We speak and rightly against the methods of those secular schools which do nothing for the forming of character and merely impart to the pupils a godless learning which leaves their hearts and wills undisciplined and untrained. But we should ourselves scrutinize the effects of our own training. We also shall have proved deficient in our education of the young if we have merely trained them to exterior submissiveness or have even developed in them only that element of character which consists in doing as they are told. We must go farther and truly prepare them for the

struggle of life. We must warn them and fortify them against the world, as it is to-day.

Again, religious teachers are apt, as we have already remarked, to look on their pupils as objects of benevolence. So indeed they are and we receive great merit for what we do for them. But it is to the interest of the child not to be regarded as an object of good works, but to be taught itself to perform good works even at the cost of sacrifice.

The religious in the class room becomes for the child a symbol of unselfish service. Perhaps at the time the thoughtless mind of youth does not grasp and appreciate the efforts being made for it. But the mature man or woman will look back on the teaching sister as a benefactor and consider that through her the Catholic Church has achieved a great work. Still, the idea that the Catholic pupil or the Catholic layman who has been a pupil is obliged in turn to defend, support and propagate that Faith which he received at school is not very strongly inculcated by the fact that he has been, while a student, the recipient of so much goodness.

The recollections of school are for the most

part of benefits received not given. Does not this account in part for the attitude of so many Catholic people who in the depths of their hearts calmly and habitually relinquish to the priests and sisters the whole burden of the Church's apostolate? All during school time they were accustomed to be recipients, not givers. Active sacrifice and effort were seldom or never asked of them in behalf of others. The consequence is that their whole attitude toward the Church is one of expectancy. Their gratitude, to paraphrase the cynical definition, is in large measure a lively expectation of favors to come.

They wish to receive all the good influence and blessings of Catholic ministrations. They wish their children to be taught by religious as they were taught. But when we make an appeal to them to take a leading part in Catholic activities on behalf of others, or to contribute generously according to their means for the expansion and support of the Catholic school system, we are sometimes surprised and disappointed at their lack of response. May it not be that we have missed the early opportunity we had of training them to co-operate?

While at school we did everything for them, and asked little in return. We accustomed them to receive, but not to give.

Now it is much easier for the religious teacher to go quietly ahead with her work for the children, doing all she can in their behalf, looking upon them as objects of her benevolence, than it is for her to take the persistent attitude of training them to make sacrifices and expend effort in behalf of the Church. Opportunities are never wanting for getting the children to work for others. The experiences of the boy scouts and girl scouts have shown that youngsters decidedly like to be called on for these little services. To do a good turn to someone every day, is one of the fundamental principles of the scouts. And it intrigues the youthful fancy. Could we not do very much more than we do at present, deliberately to inculcate this principle in our pupils and thus to prepare them for a helpful and co-operative life in after years?

There are many ingenious ways in which the teacher may do this. The missions are arousing great enthusiasm in our schools and the acts of self-sacrifice made by the pupils in

their mission work are of great educational value. But there are many other lines of school boy and school girl effort which would be equally practicable. Thus for example the cause of Catholic literature would be wonderfully helped by the steadfast co-operation of Catholic students. Those in the lower classes could collect quantities of Catholic magazines and papers from their homes and those of their neighbors and bring them to school to be taken by other pupils to the hospitals and public institutions, or to be remailed to selected addresses. Pupils might be given lists of Catholic books and urged to call for them at the public library and to keep them in circulation when once they have been secured.

In the higher classes the students could be interested in buying books, as we have suggested, and forming their own library. While the teacher is promoting these student good works, if she uses as a motive the duty which every Catholic has of helping Catholic literature and the great good which the pupils can achieve in after-life by keeping up such activities, she will be orienting them effectively for a future life of usefulness and linking up the

training of the school with the chivalric battling for Catholic interests of after-life.

Take, again, the work of Catechetical instruction. How many of the pupils in the higher classes of our schools are quite capable of teaching a Catechism class of neglected children in some poor parish, or of gathering a group during vacation, wherever they may go for the summer, and teaching them their Faith. Such work gives the children valued contacts with those less fortunate than themselves. It sinks the Faith deeper into their own intelligences, for one of the best ways to learn is to teach. Besides, such constant training while at school will raise up that generation of lay Catechists so sorely needed to save the hundreds of thousands of under-advantaged children who are now growing up without adequate instruction. Here the religious teacher will find a splendid field of effort in preparing the children and encouraging them for Catechetical work. It will, besides, greatly add to the interest of the classes in religion and Christian Doctrine if the pupils realize that they are not only learning for

themselves but are preparing to teach the Faith to others less fortunate than they.

We have multiplied suggestions concerning the activities possible to Catholic students in chapter 2 of the book entitled "Social Organization in Parishes." We have spoken there of the poor aid section, of the social study club, of the Catholic instruction section, of sections respectively for entertainment, athletics, music, authorship, lectures, sewing, citizenship and civic studies, immigrant aid, children's aid, parish school aid. We have told of academies to study literature, art, history, economics, sociology, science, current events, domestic science, dramatics. From this array of possible activities, the teacher can select at least one or two which may be suitable under almost any school conditions. No one, of course, can do everything suggested nor is this the intention. But from the abundant repast supplied, every teacher can choose some nourishing dishes for her pupils.

We are fully aware how much is already being done in these regards by some of our devoted teachers. We observe besides a constant and encouraging increase of interest in such

activities. Blessed is the teacher who keeps constantly in mind the great need to train her pupils in such ways for after-life. Blessed is the school which sends out into the world each year its groups of graduates thus fortified and armed for the struggles of the Church.

IV

Training Students to Choose

IT were well indeed that all our devoted Catholic teachers, whatever the special subject of their teaching, should have also, besides their technical knowledge, a thorough realization of and a practical estimate of the difficulties and dangers no less than the opportunities and advantages which will meet their pupils when they leave the doors of school. Religious teachers in particular have often to make a special effort in order to realize adequately the life which their pupils will lead in the world. From the seclusion of a religious community that world, with its temptations and trials, may look far otherwise than it does to the men and women who are actively struggling in its maelstrom. Yet it is for life in the world that most of the pupils in our schools are being prepared, and it is there that the fruits of our educational system are tried and tested, approved or found wanting.

Moralists in every age have been justified in speaking out against the dangers of the world, its illusions and pitfalls. But it it doubtful whether the interest, the attractiveness and distractions of the world were ever much greater than at present. So far as wickedness is concerned, it is difficult to draw comparisons. But in point of allurements, distractions, diversity of interests, our times seem to bear away the palm of history.

In fact we have all the old means of entertainment and amusement, we are heirs of all the ideas, true and false, of the centuries, an indefatigable news system acquaints us every morning and evening with the chief happenings of the entire world, amusements of every sort are multiplied not only as to number but as to kind. The radio, the moving picture, all ways of swift transportation and intercommunication, have so agumented the facilities for amusement that this seems to have become one of the chief businesses of mankind.

Now worldliness is dangerous, not only because it makes men and women love too much this present life, but also because it inclines them to forget the hereafter. No man can

serve two masters, God and Mammon. For either he will neglect the one or the other. If he serves God, he must sacrifice to some degree the pleasures and interests of this world. If he serves Mammon, he will inevitably neglect and disregard the interests of God.

Thus, life is nowadays, what it has ever been, but to a greater degree, perhaps, and in more multiplied instances, a constant choosing between the side of God and the side of the world. Those who cleave to God must constantly elect to give up something of the world, allurements and amusements, even innocent ones. But those who devote themselves frankly to the world will inevitably give up and sacrifice what belongs to God.

One of the most important elements then, in training our pupils for life, is evidently to develop in them the habit and power of deliberate choice by which they will be strengthened and fortified to a degree which will enable them to choose consistently and deliberately, so far as their duty goes at least, the things that are God's. It will be profitable and interesting for all Catholic teachers to consider with themselves just how far their

way of dealing with their pupils is an education, so to say, in deliberate choice, a training of the will and a strengthening of the character which will dispose and enable them when the occasion arises to choose the things which are of God.

The will, of course, is strengthened by exercise. In its own way it responds as surely and as definitely to exercise as does the muscle of the arm. Every time the will is induced to make a right and deliberate choice, it becomes just so much stronger to make such a choice in the future. On the contrary, if the individual is saved the trouble of making choices, or allowed no opportunity to do so, the will inclines to become weakened and inert.

Now candor compels the student of present day education to confess that the mere routine of class-room teaching does not tend in itself to exercise the faculty of choice. We are not speaking now of the preliminary choice of a pupil between courses or subjects. In this regard more and more opportunity is given for election. But we speak of the ordinary work of the class room day in and day out and of the contact of pupil with teacher during the school

hours and outside of them. Do these as a rule tend to cultivate in the pupil the deliberate habit of choosing according to principle and from personal initiative? If they do not, then our training should be supplemented by some definite exercises for the strengthening of the will and the cultivation of the habit of choosing conscientiously and rightly.

It will not do to say that class-room exercises, from the nature of the case, exclude this training of deliberate choice. It is not so much the exercise of the class room as the attitude of the pupil which effects this training. Two pupils may sit side by side in the same class room, subject to the same exterior influences and compulsion. One may be quite passive and without any personal volition except a wish to avoid trouble and to comply with whatever has to be complied with. The other may be constantly exercising his will in acts of deliberate choice to overcome sloth, to keep attentive and diligent, to co-operate actively and from principle with everything the teacher suggests or directs. The one pupil is constantly strengthening his character, the other merely drifting with the current and acquiring a habit

of drifting which will be a severe handicap in after-life.

The attitude of the teacher would seem to have much to do with the attitude of the pupils in this regard. Some teachers stimulate the will of their pupils to active co-operation with their efforts. Others seem to dominate and subject the wills of their scholars so as to leave them little personal volition or choice of any kind. Others still, of course, create a sort of anarchy which is neither active co-operation nor passive compliance. There is no need to say which of these three classes of teachers is training the child most effectively for after-life. Yet, strange though it may sound to say it, the least effective of all these three attitudes of the teacher as training for life, an education in deliberate and rightful choosing, is that of the one who dominates and subjects the will of her scholars so as to discourage in them any habit of deliberate choice.

So far as maintaining discipline is concerned, keeping order, and even insuring the performance of allotted tasks, it must be confessed that the teacher who dominates and subjects her scholars has the easiest time. It is

the quickest and surest way to secure uniformity. On the other hand to train children to choose, to cultivate in them the spirit of self-reliance and individual responsibility requires, undoubtedly, much more effort on the part of the teacher, all else being equal. But if the teacher vividly keeps before her the circumstances in which these children will be in after life, the temptations that will surround them, the many occasions they will have for exercising the right choice when to fail to do so may ruin them body and soul, she will think it worth while deliberately to set about training them to personal initiative and to the habit of conscientious choosing.

Merely to call attention to this need and opportunity on the part of the teacher is a step towards meeting it. The details of the process have to be studied out by the individual teacher, who, if she keeps in mind the after-life of her pupils, will find many ways of training them to choose for themselves while at school so that they may choose wisely in after-life.

The very attitude of the teacher has, let us repeat, a great deal to do with the attitude of

her pupils in this regard. If they see that she insists on their acting merely by her say so and following her directions because she has given them, they will acquiesce in this attitude and their law will be the will of the teacher, not because to obey is right and because they choose freely to do what is right, but because it would be dangerous to do anything else and it is easier to submit than to take the consequences of refusing.

But if the teacher makes use of the discipline of the class room to accustom them to obey because to obey is right, and to disobey is evil; if she keeps constantly in mind the need of developing in the children, little by little, and with much patience, the sense of personal responsibility, and the duty of choosing rightly for the love of God and for conscience's sake, she will succeed in some measure. Any degree of success in such a matter is a triumph and an achievement because it will have great consequences in after days.

We ought to be more solicitous to give this sort of training in proportion as we see that it is difficult to do so, for the very reluctance of the child to learn to act reasonably and choose

conscientiously is a sign of the necessity of such training. The truth is that the inertia of human nature itself makes everyone slow to learn the habit of conscientious choosing. As a rule boys and girls and men and women as well have a tendency to drift with the current, to follow the line of least resistance and to act less from conscience and honor than from present convenience and expediency.

Knowing this we should redouble our efforts to train our pupils to the intelligent use of their own free will. We should make it a point of honor with ourselves to give them this advantage, nay this necessary equipment for after-life. It will be one of the most precious of preparations which the school can afford to give them and the lack of it will go far to discount and overbalance any other benefit we can give.

Look abroad over the world outside the doors of school and see the various paths in which at this present moment the former pupils of our Catholic institutions are walking or wandering. Some, faithful to the instructions they have received, are worthy Catholics and good citizens. They do their duty to God

and man and are, as Christ has bidden them to be, the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They support the Catholic schools, they take due part in Catholic activities, they are the credit and the consolation of the teachers who sent them forth after patient years of training and instruction.

Others, not so many to be sure as the first, but numerous enough for all that, are drifting precariously so far as religion is concerned, caught by the currents of the world and getting apparently farther and farther away from the Faith and loyalties of their school days. They weakly compromise, where there is a question of religion and principles, with the spirit of the world. They have, apparently, surrendered to influences which carry them farther and farther away from the Church. Little trace of the Catholic training they received while at school is now to be found in their life and actions.

What has happened to this second class of our graduates? Evidently the choice was offered them which is offered to every man who goes out in the world, between Christ on the one hand, the world, the flesh and the devil on

the other. They are not choosing wisely nor conscientiously. They have either drifted with the current or have deliberately taken sides with evil. What is the reason why some of our pupils thus go astray while others remain constant and true?

The most fundamental reason, of course, is the freedom of the human will. In every group of graduates some may be found who deliberately and of free choice depart from the teachings of their school days. Yet is it not true that with more effective training in right choosing, we might greatly reduce the number of those who thus go astray? If we bend our attention more on that effective training for after-life which consists in developing the will, and exercising the power of right choosing, we could fortify and save some of those pupils who now, more from weakness than from malice, go sadly astray.

All these remarks are not by way of belittling the great and signal good that is already being accomplished in our Catholic schools, a good which is incalculably great. Rather we wish to direct the attention of our teachers to an element of training which in the

stress and diversity of present day education is likely to be a little neglected. Let us train our children deliberately and constantly to the habit of right choosing. It will crown our work of education.

V

Two Modes of Influence

IT will be interesting to continue our discussion of the important theme of training the characters of our pupils for after-life by dwelling on two different modes of influence, which teachers may exert, both practical and effective, so far as school days are concerned, but the one infinitely more sure to produce permanent results for after-life. To distinguish these two ways of swaying children (and for that matter children, too, of larger growth) let us call the one the method of influencing them without, inward and the other the way of exerting control from within, outward. The expressions may seem at first sight peculiar, but to elucidate them will not be without profit.

By the mode of influence from without, inward we should like to designate that way of directing and controlling others which consists in applying persuasion to them as it were from

the outside, urging them to do this or that because we wish it and order it, not because of the fitness or worthiness of the action in itself. "Do this because I wish it" "Do that because I urge you to do so," "Do that other thing because it will please me or because I shall be displeased if you refuse." Motives such as these lend to the will the strength of another will, they act upon it, so to say, from without; they do not exercise the will itself to independent resolution, but only to submissiveness and a passive sort of obedience.

The other manner of influence consists in supplying the will itself with worthy and cogent motives, and we have called this mode the way of influence from within, outward. We achieve it by explaining as well as urging, by making vivid and vital those motives which make the will love and embrace the action itself for its own goodness. Then, our training might be expressed in some such way as the following: "Do this because it is so good in itself, it is so worthy of you, it is worth while doing, God wishes it, not to do so would be a loss to you and a failing in precious service to God." In influencing a child in this way

we train it to an activity which is independent of our continuous urging. We form in its will habits of choosing on principle, of yielding to noble motives, of weighing and considering not what this person or that will like, but what is right and suitable in itself, pleasing to God and in accord with religion and good principle.

To make the matter clearer by concrete examples, let us suppose that a teacher, full of zeal and good intentions, uses on her pupils the first method of influence, that which we have called from without, inward. She will wish all her charges, let us say, to go frequently to Communion. They will soon realize, from her words and manner, that she desires very much that they should go to Communion as often as possible. Those who do so will feel that they are pleasing her. Those who do not are sensible of some displeasure on her part.

If she has an influence over them, they will want to do what she likes and, so long as they are subject to her sway, they will continue to go often to holy Communion. "Sister will like it if we do." "Sister will be disappointed if we don't." In such ways as this, the pupils would express, if they were candid, their chief

motive for so acting. Of course, it is a good motive in itself and efficacious as long as it lasts. But evidently such a motive is not very effective training for after-life. For as soon as the pupils leave the sphere of influence of their teacher, their chief motive for frequent Communion fails, and if they have no other, they will simply leave off the blessed practice.

One may apply this same analysis to many other departments of training or influence. Take the matter of Catholic reading and good reading in general. Suppose the teacher insists on good reading and encourages it among the pupils by making them feel that she wishes it, will be pleased by it, will be disappointed by its absence. Then, if they like the teacher, or are influenced by her, the pupils will undoubtedly do a certain amount of good reading. But there is nothing lasting or permanent about their worthy disposition in this regard. In after-life, when they have left school far behind, there will be no enduring motive in their will to continue reading for culture. So, lacking the motive, they will be likely to discontinue the practice.

The same mode of influence may be em-

ployed, to take another instance, in the organization of school activities, such as the sections of the Sodality. Some teachers, having a strong personal influence over their pupils, can make them do almost anything they please. Activities are taken up, there is work done for Catholic literature, magazines are collected and distributed, clothing is gathered for the poor, mission work is set on foot, the self-denial fund is established and generously contributed to,—there is great activity in the Sodality. But, in the cases we refer to where influence is exerted from without, inward, all this activity arises not so much from a love of the Sodality or an appreciation of the excellence of such good works, but because "Sister wants us to do it" and "Sister will be disappointed if we don't do it."

Here again, though the immediate results are very praiseworthy, the training for after-life leaves much to be desired. For as soon as the children get away from the good influence of the Sister in question, they very probably will forget and neglect the good works to which they have been accustomed under her dominating sway.

Let us now consider some examples of the other mode of influence, that which we have called from within, outward. The Sister, we shall suppose, is quite as zealous personally for frequent Communion as the one whom we have just described. But she chooses to exert her influence in this direction by giving the children the stimulus of powerful motives which arise from the excellence of the frequent Communion in itself and the benefit it is to the soul. She tries to make the children understand more and more the sweet reasonableness of frequent Communion, its extraordinary efficacy, the many blessings which flow from it. True, her personal influence has its weight, but it is not the predominating motive which urges the children to frequent Communion. They respond chiefly because she has impressed them with the holiness, the desirableness, the abiding blessedness of going to Communion frequently and if possible every day.

It must be confessed that this method is more difficult than the former and may even be less fruitful in immediate results. It is hard to get children to think and understand, easier to sway them through their personal loy-

alty to the teacher or even through the strong will of the teacher, which makes it easier for them to yield than to resist. Yet the second method trains and fortifies them for life. It accustoms them to act from personal choice, not because of the influence of others. It gives them a will of their own and a will, moreover, fortified with the good motives which they can remember and act on after they have left school. At the moment of their graduation, they quit the sphere of influence which the personal will or magnetism of the teacher has put about them. They can never quite lose the powerful motives, the intelligent comprehension of the excellence and desirableness of frequent Communion which she has been able to impart to them.

So, too, in the matter of good reading, the teacher who employs the second mode of influence will encourage and persuade the pupils to cultivate a taste for good reading by showing them the desirable results which will follow to themselves and to others from the acquisition of the habit of good reading. She will get them to read the right sort of books, not only nor primarily because she wishes it or

urges it, but because of the solid and substantial motives which she makes clear to them and which would impel any serious-minded and intelligent person to cultivate the habit of reading good books. This again is more difficult than the former method, but it is a very much better training for after-life. To accustom the pupil to read good books because the teacher says so, because "she will be pleased if you do and displeased if you don't," creates in the pupil's mind an attitude of passive compliance. As soon as the influence of the teacher wanes at the end of school, so too will the pupil's inclination to read good books. But the student who has once deeply realized the excellence of a habit of good reading and the personal motives which he should have for acquiring and keeping it, will be much more likely in after years to persevere in what he has been taught to love and esteem from abiding motives.

So too, to complete our comparison, the activities of the Sodality and in general the altruistic and generous enterprises of the students during school days, had much better be commended to them from strong interior mo-

tives than urged on them by some popular or influential teacher. Young folk have a certain native generosity which can be cultivated in no small degree and this early training in helpfulness and thoughtfulness of others will bring to them in after-life inestimable fruits, no less of personal happiness than of worthy service to others. But the effective way to cultivate this spirit is by giving them the right motives for charity, by making them see the excellence of such endeavors in themselves. If they work while at school only out of deference for the teacher or even out of human respect, because "everybody does it," flocking like sheep after their leader, they will be likely in after-life to neglect quite deplorably the lessons they learned in school. Because in after-life human respect and the habit of flocking after their leader and doing what someone else wishes will be apt to lead them in quite a different direction.

Our devoted teachers are often surprised and sometimes deeply discouraged to find how little influence their earnest instructions and exhortations have had on the after-life of certain of their pupils. They bemoan the fact, at

times, that their training seems to have sunk in so little, that those pupils who seemed most loyal to them while at school and showed signs of real piety and goodness, have, a few years after leaving school, done things which disgraced their training, fallen in with the current of the world, neglected their religious duties, and quite disappointed the hopes that were built upon them. It will be useful in such cases to consider whether the influence we had on such children was grounded enough on motives and instructions, on the sort of training which we have described as from within, outward. Such reflections would probably have a salutary effect on our treatment and training of our present-day pupils.

It is the more useful to dwell on these things because our Catholic education inclines to be paternal or maternal as the case may be and because our teachers have such a great personal influence on their pupils. This brings many happy results, but it has also its dangers. The very intensity of the teacher's interest in pupils, the strong and persuasive force of that interest on the pupil himself, rather tends to make the student act for the sake of pleasing the teacher

more than from an appreciation of the intrinsic excellence and desirableness of doing one's best and laboring for self-improvement.

On the teacher's part, the strong sway secured over the pupils by devoted charity and self-sacrificing labors is such an easy means of ruling them for good, that we may too readily neglect the character training that comes from the mode of influence which we have called "from within, outward." Since we can secure immediate results with no other motive save our personal influence, there is a temptation to dispense with other motives and to rule chiefly through that influence.

Finally, it is scarcely necessary to remark that these two modes are not antagonistic nor mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they may go together and help one another. The love which the pupil bears to the teacher, the influence exerted on him, will make it all the easier to instill the solid motives, the interior dispositions, the lasting appreciation of good, which will be fruitful in after-life. We wish to accentuate the excellence and necessity of training the pupil from within, because there is a

danger that this phase of education should in practice be less attended to.

Surely it is a consolation to the teacher when she sees her pupils leave school for good, to embark on the very turbulent and trying seas of life, to reflect that she has fortified them inwardly so far as she could, with motives, resolves, habits of personal fidelity and fervor which will increase rather than lessen with the years. She hopes that they will remember her wherever their footsteps may wander. But she is confident that they will never forget the strong training of reason and of will she has given them.

VI

Doing Too Much for Them

THE children, their interests, their proper training, their preparation for life, are the reason for the existence of our schools. The child's welfare must therefore be the paramount consideration in every Catholic class room. This is a mere truism. It needs no proof. It is clear from the nature of the case. Our pupils are the object of all our cares and endeavors. Whatever is best for them, that we desire to accomplish.

It is well to set this strongly and clearly in mind for the sake of the thought we are about to develop. Despite the fact that schools exist for the pupil, there is sometimes danger that the pupil's interests may become secondary in the very important matter which forms the subject of this article. For we mean to continue in this chapter our inquiry whether it may not be that the teacher does too much herself at times and lets the pupil do too little.

From the standpoint of the teacher, to instruct children is a beautiful and sublime work of Christian mercy. Those that teach many unto justice shall shine like stars for all eternity. In the case of the Sister, this work is further blessed and made sublime by the threefold consecration of poverty, chastity and obedience. When the Catholic Sister enters the class room, she undertakes one of the most meritorious works of Christian charity. In her ears sound the sweet and pleading words of the Saviour, "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

Yet, if the teacher dwells exclusively upon this aspect of her work, its merit, its nobility from the standpoint of the teacher, its beauty as a Christian charity, she may overlook one of the greatest of the pupils' interests; not, indeed, because the interests of teacher and pupil are in conflict, but rather because our human intelligences are limited and if bent strongly on one object, are apt to lose sight of another. There is danger, then, that unless the teacher takes special care in the matter, her very anxiety to do everything possible for her

charges, may actually result in hurting their character.

This is, after all, not a criticism but rather the calling attention to a possible excess of a good quality. The devoted care which our Sisters lavish on their charges, is the reason for those excellent results observable in the pupils of parish schools. May we not admit as well that some deficiencies which are occasionally noticed in those very same pupils, may be a consequence of sometimes going too far and doing too much for the children while not requiring of them enough of personal effort and initiative, of energy, and self-sacrifice?

The world is a rude schoolmaster and its methods differ strikingly from those of the parish school. If the pupil becomes too much accustomed to being guided and helped in everything, and is not given occasion to shift for himself or to feel the consequences of his own lack of initiative and energy while at school, he will have some rude surprises afterwards. How often we see a boy who has been trained in difficult surroundings, develop a vigor of character which pushes up through all manner of opposition and wins singular success

in life. On the contrary, boys raised under easy and pleasant circumstances are sometimes weakened by the sheltering care they experience and prove unfit for hard struggles afterwards.

Our devoted teachers themselves will be able, on reflection, to discern how much truth there is in these observations. It will not do to exaggerate the importance of letting children sometimes shift for themselves and allowing them to feel the consequences of their own want of initiative and perseverance. Yet, the thought is a useful one. It will be for our teachers themselves to apply it in due degree to their own work in the class room.

Let us illustrate by some instances. In the difficult but necessary task of organizing Catholic societies and good works, those in charge sometimes find themselves hard put to it to discover the right leaders, men or women, who are fit for responsibility, have energy, initiative and common sense, and at the same time are willing to make sacrifices. It happens occasionally that among all the graduates of Catholic schools and colleges, no one can be found to assume the responsibility and labor of

chief officer and promoter of some useful work. Then, it may be, some man or woman who was obliged to leave school at an early age and fight with the world for a position and a place, comes forward to take the lead, and carries on the work to success. Where are all the others, with good talents, special training, all the advantages of Catholic education? Nor is this a very exceptional experience. Perhaps by doing too much for our pupils, we may have sometimes failed to cultivate in them the sturdy virtues of initiative, self-sacrifice, energy, whose aid we need in after years.

Again, it is often remarked that Catholics often leave everything to the priests and Sisters when it comes to Catholic activities. Many causes may converge to bring this about. But if we analyze the matter carefully, does it not seem that doing too much for the children while at school, may help to produce such an attitude? If the pupil is accustomed to rely on the teacher for everything, to be reminded, supported, directed on all occasions, is it not natural that this should beget an attitude of such dependence that it will persist in after years, at least so far as concerns the very af-

fairs which are the special province of priests and Sisters, the interests of the Faith and the Church?

"Our Catholic schools," remarked an observant and sagacious priest not long ago, "are ninety-nine per cent perfect. They are the greatest of all systems of education. The one per cent in which they fail is that they do too much for the children and do not develop in them enough individual self-reliance and initiative. I have noticed time and again," he continued, "how well the children behave while the Sister is with them. They look to her for everything. They notice and obey her least sign. But when, for some reason, it has happened that the Sister was absent or was called away for a time, it was noticeable how much at a loss the children were. They did not know what to do or where to turn. They were like sheep without a shepherd."

We offer this good priest's observations for what they are worth. The reflection will occur that any crowd of children might manifest similar symptoms if left by themselves. Yet he thought that parish school pupils were unusually dependent on the guidance of their

teachers. In any event his remarks will give food for interesting discussion on the part of our teachers themselves who have so intimate a knowledge of the situation.

Where this condition exists, it is not so difficult to suggest a remedy. We would not have our devoted teachers do any less for the children but rather would have them pay more attention to getting the children to do more themselves. In the classroom the attitude of the pupils is necessarily passive in great part. They are the listeners and the learners. They are under authority and discipline and these are good and necessary for them. But even in the classroom the teacher's attention should always be bent to developing in the children an attitude of personal initiative and activity. Her first thought should be to lead the child to think and will for himself rather than to work upon the child as an object of benevolence.

As to the activities of the scholar outside the class room, they offer extraordinary opportunities for personal training of the children in initiative, self-sacrifice, the capacity for leadership. Wellington's famous remark that the

Battle of Waterloo was won on the fives courts of England is one of the greatest commendations of games as an educational influence that ever was spoken. Indeed, play rightly directed is of great use in training character. We remember a good many years ago the observations of a French writer in the *Etudes* who deplored the lack among French students of games like those of England and of the United States. He advocated the introduction of them, for their educational value, and in fact they are making their way around the world.

But it is in the school activities and societies that this spirit of self-reliance and initiative and self-sacrifice may be most directly cultivated. It is actually easier for the teacher in charge of these things to take on herself the management and responsibility of details than to get the pupils to carry them through. Yet, it is not wise to do so. The value in terms of training for the pupils of carrying out details of little enterprises, is very great. If they are early accustomed to depend on themselves, to assume little responsibilities, to make small acts of self-sacrifice for the sake of school

interests, they will be made ready for greater efforts in the future. The teacher who does everything herself has an easier path than she who gets the children to "do things." But it is the latter who is training the children for life and her extra exertions in getting things done by them are the measure of her efficiency as an educator to initiative.

It is in the school Sodality, rightly understood, that we find singular opportunities for exercising the children in the desirable qualities of initiative and self-sacrifice. True, the organization and conduct of a good school Sodality is necessarily difficult. It is difficult in exact proportion to the need of some such means of education. The difficulty comes precisely from the fact that the Sodality supplies to the students a means of cultivating virtues which are hard to achieve, but which are most desirable in after-life.

It is easy enough for the teacher who has charge of the Sodality to make it a mere devotion, a passive affair on the part of the students, which they come to as they do to any class of the school and from which they depart without having exercised any personal initiative

or activity whatsoever. But to organize a Sodality, to make it a school of the lay apostolate, to induce the students, out of love for the Blessed Virgin, to take up themselves and carry through activities suited to their age and ability; for Catholic literature, for the home and foreign Missions, for the studying of Catechism, in such a way that they will be fit to teach it afterwards,—all these require efforts far beyond what is needed for a mere devotion, but priceless from the standpoint of training for the lay apostolate.

It is strange, in a way, that this aspect of the school Sodality has escaped the practical attention of so many zealous Catholic educators. We have in our Sodalities a pedagogical agency quite unmatched in all the equipment of non-Catholic schools. The combination in the Sodality of guidance and initiative, of definite organization, and flexible adaptability, of supernatural motive and human appeal, of variety of activity and unity of purpose, makes it a precious means of training.

Besides, it offers an element of continuity between the school and life afterwards, because the student who has learned what a Sodality

should be may enter another Sodality at once on leaving school and thus continue his progress as a Sodalist into his active life in the world. "Once a Sodalist always a Sodalist" and the Sodality which really takes hold of the child at school can keep its beneficent influence over him until the grave.

This is an aspect of school life, important and interesting, not only to the teacher, but to everyone who has at heart the interests of the Church. In the school, we have the children at their impressionable and docile age and we can do what we wish with them in regard to the formation of character and preparation for after-life. We know that our Faith, being the fullness of the truth, affords us a means of developing character, cultivating generosity, instilling practical charity into the hearts of youth which no other agency can equal. It remains for us more and more to utilize this power in our schools. Nothing human but can be perfected more and more and this age demands of us that we train our children in initiative, self-sacrifice, zeal for the lay apostolate, by the best means we can find.

VII

Drifting with the Current

CATHOLIC school life is sheltered, is orderly, is moved and motived by the spirit of Christ. Life afterwards, when school is over, must be lived in a very different atmosphere, of worldliness with all that odious term implies, of struggle against enemies within and without, of distractions and preoccupations more intense and insistent than any other age ever knew. The child who leaves school, to become a man or woman in an instant, must have been carefully prepared indeed and strongly fortified if he or she is to continue harmoniously the development begun at school. If this process of preparation and fortifying has not been thoroughly done, then in one way or another the world and the flesh and the devil will have their way and the good influence of school will melt under their converging heat and flame.

To train the child for life must be therefore

a principal aim for every Catholic teacher. Not alone the getting of lessons or the passing of examinations, or the accumulation of credits, is the chief purpose of school. These things are inevitable and will be accomplished in any event in any school nowadays. But character training in preparation for life is a more subtle and difficult thing and may easily slip from notice in the midst of other preoccupations. The most devoted teacher, unless he or she is forever vigilant upon this point, may be doing less than is necessary to shape and strengthen the resistance of the child to future temptations, to build up and confirm his personal firmness or resolve to do well in the face of temptation.

We know with much clearness just what sort of society, what conditions of temptation, distraction, preoccupation, worldliness, vulgar and evil amusements, bad reading, dubious associations, await the majority of our pupils at the door of the school. It is notably more difficult for youth to keep itself free from contaminations of one sort or the other than it was in the last generation. Manners seem to have changed for the worse. The relations of

the sexes are free to a fault. Laxity of customs and fashions has swung to the reach of the pendulum. With all this there are compensations of course, but the fact remains that temptations are more frequent and acute than they were thirty years ago. We need to cultivate, then, an even stronger fiber of moral resolution in our graduates to keep them safe in such environments and enable them to carry out in real life the principles and teachings we gave them while at school.

It will be well to consider in this connection whether our present method of training leaves anything to be desired in the way of fortifying our pupils against one of the greatest of temptations which they will meet in after-life. I refer to the temptation to yield to what we call human respect. At school, public opinion and human respect flow in the right direction. The influences brought to bear upon the child by the opinions and incitements of others, urge for the most part towards goodness. The child feels the influence of a devoted teacher, expecting and desiring him to be studious, moral, obedient, virtuous. The public opinion of his little circle would be outraged by any gross

sin. He has only to drift with the current to follow the instinct of human respect and all will be well with him for the time being, because he is under so many good influences.

If a child, for seven years or more of school, grows used merely to yielding to public opinion and following human respect; if, besides, his natural character is weak and easily influenced, if he is never made to cultivate a sturdy will and a power of resisting human respect when it turns in the wrong direction, may there not be danger in this mode of training? May there not be peril that the same passive acquiescence which guided him aright during school may sweep him onto the rocks of evil-doing when he has left school and finds that same current of the influence and opinion of those about him turned in the direction of worldliness and evil?

While the stream flows placid and fair between sunny banks and in safe and pleasant places, the oarsman may yield to the current and be carried on without labor. But unless some previous exercise has taught him to ply a sturdy oar when the rapids threaten and the stream grows wild, he will be carried onto the

rocks and dashed over the falls by the same strong current which bore him so pleasantly through the upper reaches of the stream.

We should prepare, therefore, for our pupils, deliberate exercises in the contempt of human respect when it becomes an obstacle to well-doing, by personal choice, initiative and self-sacrifice. These exercises must be suited to the capacity of the student, must fit in well with the exercises of school. They must have some quality of persistence, or they will have little effect in forming character. They must not impose too great a burden on the teacher, or they will not fit in with the other severe demands of school life.

Rightly understood and properly organized, the school societies, the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, offer a means of training in this regard which is extraordinarily effective. Did our earnest and hard-working Catholic teachers realize fully what possibilities are inherent in these societies they would utilize them to far greater effect for the foundation of character. At present, so far as we know, it is rather the exception to find such societies in

the primary schools developed to their full efficacy for character training.

The usual activities of school are characterized of necessity by strict discipline and exact regulation. These, of their nature, do not tend to cultivate initiative nor personal autonomy. If they are submitted to in an active and willing spirit, they strengthen the character. If bowed to in passive acquiescence, they rather form a habit of submission than of active effort. Hence a child of naturally weak character, becoming used to submit to discipline passively, is not trained thereby for active resistance to evil influences afterwards nor to the carrying out of personal resolves against the temptations and distractions of after-life.

But in a Sodality the wise director may find the widest opportunity to cultivate precisely these elements of character. There, the pupils may safely be given a wide range for whatever originality of disposition, initiative, capacity, they may possess. They can be allowed to carry on little enterprises "on their own," as the phrase is, without danger to the ordinary discipline or regular order of school. The Sodality with its sections, each busy with a dif-

ferent department of activity, may be a real training school for the spirit of initiative and personal effort. Experiments may be tried and fail without any harm being done. The students may be given charge of small activities and allowed to succeed or fail as their efforts determine without any bad results either to themselves or the school.

Add to this that the very undertaking and carrying out of such activities, is in itself, an effective training in going against the current and acting in despite of human respect. To come forward and volunteer for some particular devotion or good work always involves a certain conquest of false shame, a certain resistance to false diffidence. It is a real exercise in initiative and decision. It gives the pupil an opportunity for quite spontaneous choice between offered activities. It brings into school life a whole series of choices, resistances, perseverances, disassociated from class and daily discipline. In other words it is a real training for after-life and it introduces into the period of training many of the problems, conditions, difficulties, even which the future man or woman will meet beyond the doors of school.

Clearly it is no easy matter to organize such a Sodality, to make it not merely a devotional exercise but a true organization, where devotion to the Blessed Virgin is used as a means for cultivating a real interior spirit, a life-long fervor of Catholicity of such a sort as will spontaneously overflow in good works. Any organization requires effort for its continuance, but to get children while at school to take a real and personal interest in definite good works, to make them show initiative and perseverance, to leave them a certain degree of freedom and choice and responsibility, while at the same time, directing them as need arises, all this is especially difficult. Only the extraordinary need of some such element in our training, and the great results which will come afterwards can nerve the Sodality director to such an effort.

It is easy enough to assemble the children once a week or once a month for devotions, but it is difficult to organize them into sections, one for the help of Missions, another to gather and distribute Catholic magazines and papers for the city institutions, another to promote good reading, whose members pledge them-

selves to read each month a pious book; another, the section of Our Lady's Messengers, to run errands for the Sisters and the pastor, another, to promote the work of the Knights and Handmaids and Pages of the Blessed Sacrament. Any or all of these sections directly train their members in personal effort, self-sacrifice, and the disregard of human respect so far as this runs counter to pious effort. In other words the children learn through small exercises to row against the current of selfishness, human respect, sloth and all the other natural tendencies which after-life would accentuate and which make havoc of the teachings and principles of school life.

Besides, there are always, in any group of children, some who by nature are fitted for leadership, have some capacity for direction and need training and responsibility so as to develop these admirable gifts. The ordinary routine of class gives some opportunity for this training, but Sodality work, as we have conceived it, is endlessly richer in such chances. The mere fact that Sodality work is spontaneous, is done outside of school, has a resemblance to the sort of work which lay folk

can do afterwards, makes it a very effective means to introduce the child to the same kind though not the same degree of effort which will be offered it afterward in the ranks of the lay apostolate. A little thought will enable any teacher of experience to develop this consideration of the practical worth of Sodality work as a preparation for after-life and a training in rowing against the current of human respect, and of selfishness and worldliness.

Another element in the school Sodality which makes it eminently suitable for training for after-life, is the fact that Sodalities exist everywhere, in parishes throughout the land, and that new ones are continually being organized as new parishes develop. If then, while at school, the pupil develops a practical loyalty to the Sodality, and gains a thorough impression of its active purpose to organize the lay apostolate, then when he goes from school he will find ample opportunity to associate himself with Sodality work in one form or another and thus to continue without a break the good works which he has learned and practiced at school. If the Sodality exists

where he goes to live, then he can help to build it up and complete its organization. If it not yet found there, he can suggest and aid its establishment.

We have alluded already to the lack of continuity now complained of in our system, by reason of which a pupil who leaves school is thrown into life without any further organic connection between his present life in the world, so different and so difficult, and his former life at school, so ordered and in comparison so easy. School, with its good influences seems at once to fall far behind and in the distance. A new set of duties, responsibilities, interests enter the young life and with them come likewise a new series of distractions, temptations, allurements, which tend to obscure and blur the training received at school.

We should keep a strong, effective hold upon our pupils just at the time when they are quitting school and going out into the whirl of life. With well-organized Sodalities in the schools themselves, we can train the pupils to loyalty, character, the spirit of perseverance, the habit of rowing stoutly against the current. We can impress upon them that "once a So-

dalist, always a Sodalist," that they have entered while at school a lifelong chivalry of devotion and honor to the Blessed Virgin. Then, by means of well-organized Sodalities in the parishes, we could take hold of our new graduates, introduce them to life, keep them in training for resisting human respect and conquering worldliness and so save many who now fall a prey to the world, the flesh, and the devil and lose the precious fruit of their Catholic education.

VIII

The Worth of Catholic Culture

NON-CATHOLICS of refinement and good taste envy us Catholics, secretly or openly, for our inheritance of culture. Not so very long ago, as I have elsewhere related, I was chatting with a man who has devoted more time and energy to literary criticism, particularly in the domain of poetry, than has any Catholic of my acquaintance. He loves poetry with a single hearted affection which seems motived by the love of beauty. Though he might have made much greater profit from some other department of letters, he has been content with the meagre returns from poetic criticism.

We fell to talking about the inspiration of modern day poetry. He made a frank confession. "I envy you Catholics," he said. "All the purest springs of poetic inspiration are in your Church. Outside it, the world is a desert. Even non-Catholic poets have to come to you

for their highest themes. I wish," he finished, "that I could be a Catholic myself. What poetry I could write if I had your faith, your Catholic faith!"

What this man said of poetic inspiration is true of nearly every department of great art. Painting, sculpture, architecture, without Catholic inspiration would be poor beyond words. The traveller in Europe, astonished and overcome by the tremendous richness of artistic treasures inherited from past centuries, is no less impressed by the fact that what is best and noblest in these mighty originals is owed to Catholic inspiration. The sublime cathedrals, which rise so grandly from the soil of Europe, are volumes in stone wherein the ages of faith have written the beauty and variety of Catholic history and legend, doctrine and principle, faith and devotion. They owe their glory and their charm to Catholic faith. Even the unbeliever who enters those majestic portals, rich with sculptured memorials of the faith, and stands in the dim and sacred interiors, where piety breathes like a perfume on the air, is struck with awe and owns in silence the power of the Christian ideals.

The best treasures of those countless museums wherein the cities have placed their chief artistic possessions also come from the Church. Painting and sculpture are enriched beyond telling with Catholic masterpieces which not only owe their achievement to the patronage of Catholic prelates, but whose very subjects and spirit would be inconceivable without the inspiration of Catholic teaching, devotion, history, liturgy. The simple and sacred fervor of the middle ages, the love of beauty of the Renaissance, both profited so much from Catholic inspiration that without it European culture in its choicest flower would have been impossible.

It is so too in literature. France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, owe the most exquisite of their classics to the Catholic tradition. Even the northern nations, Germany, England, inherited in their literature much of the refinement of Catholic feeling, the richness of storied memories, so deeply had the Church implanted them in the popular mind. The greatest literary masters of our race, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Calderon, Racine, and the rest, whether or not, (as was the case of most of them,)

they were themselves believers, took their greatest inspiration from the Church and without her inheritance of culture would have found it impossible to achieve their masterpieces.

These things we all know in general and we rather pride ourselves upon them. Well, but what are we actually doing, as Catholic teachers, to convey this heritage of Catholic culture to our pupils? It is a priceless, necessary, general inheritance of the educated Catholic child this long result of Catholic culture —never more accessible than now. Are we succeeding effectively in giving to our students their heritage of culture, this appreciation of Catholic art and letters, this abiding taste for what is best, soundest, most approved by the loving judgment of centuries?

Few questions are more practical at the present time than this one, strange as the statement may seem to those who do not estimate aright the value of culture. Most other elements of education have not near so actual a bearing on real life as it is lived as this one of the acquiring of a true taste and appreciation for Catholic culture. It would be better

for a child to miss half and more of the erudition or information or examination-matter or what you will of our modern courses than to fail to acquire a trained appreciation, at least the beginnings of a cultured Catholic taste.

A man or woman may be truly educated and refined and yet know little of this or that department of information. Real education is the training of the tastes, the feelings, appreciations, as well as of the memory and the will. A child may pass all the examinations on the list and yet come forth from school uneducated if it has not received something of that culture or at least that desire to become cultured which is a priceless result of true Catholic training.

For this reason our devoted teachers, while they labor to equal the non-Catholic schools in the efficiency of their instruction, and the excellence of their curriculum, ought to be sure to surpass them in this one point where we enjoy so extraordinary an advantage—the giving of culture, especially the developing of a true and lasting taste and appreciation for Catholic masterpieces. Not to excel in this

would be a deep deficiency in our Catholic system. But were we actually to allow the other schools to out-distance us in their imparting of culture, then how should we give an account of our stewardship of the great inheritance which we hold in trust for our Catholic girls and boys?

Yet, when one runs over the catalogues of secular booksellers, the lists of libraries and the curricula of schools, one is moved to fear that Catholics are second in their appreciation of Catholic culture to some non-Catholic individuals and institutions. For one book by Catholics on distinctively Catholic art, on the great originals of Italy, France, Spain, the low countries, one will find ten by non-Catholic authors who have devoted such loving care to their researches and grown so enthusiastic in their appreciation of distinctively Catholic masterpieces that one is moved to wonder and regret that one does not find such fervor in Israel!

And what of our schools? Let each of us, without censuring any other, consider what effort, what sincere appreciation, what zeal for Catholic culture and the appreciation of what is best and noblest in Catholic art and literature

holds sway in his or her own work and influence with pupils.

In the crowding of courses of study, the press of new methods, the competition with outside systems, teaching is no longer the tranquil occupation which it may have been in more idyllic times. There is the more reason to advert at times to such essential things as the imparting of Catholic culture. With so much else to think of, there is danger of forgetting this great requisite.

In the domain of art, it would seem difficult to avoid conveying to Catholic pupils a knowledge and appreciation of the great Catholic originals. The greatest of great art is so extraordinarily the product of Catholic faith and history! Those exquisite Madonnas, the highest expression at once of human feeling and supernatural loveliness, are altogether ours. Merely to fill the school rooms with the beautiful replicas of these works of art, to be had nowadays so cheaply, and to explain to the children something of their artistic worth and Catholic significance and inspiration, would be a daily lesson in Catholic culture. It were atrocious to neglect these lovely

masterpieces and put crude modern pictures before the eyes of our little ones at the time when their tastes are forming.

One may say as much for other Catholic pictures which are great art and should be known to all our pupils. Let them see, let them hear of, help them to understand, the most beautiful, the worthiest, of our Catholic inheritance of art. When these great originals have been studied, when they have been set before the eyes of the children and duly explained to them, there will be no time left for anything less worthy. We can use all the opportunities we have for dealing with these things and still never find time enough.

The same thing is true, and perhaps in greater measure, of Catholic literature. The secular universities are forced to take cognizance of the supremacy of certain Catholic authors such as Dante, and some of them have founded special chairs for the study of this supreme poet whose works are so built upon Catholic philosophy and theology that these form the very skeleton of his work. For a comprehension of his poetry even non-Catholics must have recourse to the sacred sciences

of the Church. Do our own schools strive as devotedly to interpret to their pupils the work of this greatest of poets? Or do they suffer themselves to be surpassed by non-Catholic teachers in enthusiasm for the sublime achievements of Catholic writers?

In English literature also, or rather in this, particularly, our Catholic teachers will surely desire to emphasize and set before their pupils what is essentially Catholic and springs from Catholic culture. We have in English such a profusion of material in poetry and prose that some selection must perforce be made for reading and study in the class room and at home. While the general lines of literary study must be respected, there still will remain to the Catholic teacher of literature a wide choice of models. In non-Catholic authors, those works and passages may well be dwelt upon which are inspired by Catholic culture and breathe the Catholic spirit.

More important still, the Catholic teacher should see to it that those authors of our own faith who deserve to be studied should have their due place in the curriculum and even should have preference over others when

everything else is equal. The very fact that they convey to the student the heritage of Catholic culture, limpid and pure and from its native springs, should gain them this preference. The circumstance that this fact of their Catholicity tells against them with some secular educators, should be an added reason for giving them a prominent place in Catholic schools. Nor do we mean that an author should be favored for study merely because he is a Catholic. Catholicity and Catholic culture are unfortunately not always found together. To extol a writer only because he is a Catholic would be almost as unwise as to follow blindly the secular preferences of non-Catholic schools. But we have material enough which is at the same time good literature and distinctively Catholic to offer for the study of our Catholic pupils.

These reflections are more intensely practical than may appear at first consideration. It is to the highest interest of the Catholic schools no less than of the Church in general to send out graduates who are marked deep with the stamp of Catholic culture. Even the beginnings of a real taste for Catholic art and

IX

A Taste for Good Reading

EDUCATION has become such an organized affair, so many details have been fixed and standardized, the system makes such demands on teachers and pupils that there may be peril at time of losing sight of the end and object of all this organized effort. The crowding of the trees may shut out the view of the forest. The dust of the road may obscure the end of the journey.

The great purpose of school is, let us repeat often, to train for life, for a full life, a harmonious, well-developed, fruitful, holy life, for a life of good thoughts, good decisions, good deeds. School aims at equipping the memory with wholesome and needful information, the imagination with salutary images, the intelligence with good and necessary truths, the will with firmness, decision, a leaning to the right in every choice.

This is a large contract, yet every pupil who

goes to school has a right to be dealt with from this viewpoint. He does not go to school merely to pass examinations, to be graded, to receive credits, to gain promotion, to be a satisfaction to his teachers, to keep up the reputation of the school. These things are only secondary to the main purpose of his entering, which is to be trained for life. The other circumstances of school are incidental and could be dispensed with. To be trained for life is absolutely essential.

All human systems must take into account the infirmities of human nature and therefore no teachers are bound to be perfect. Neither is the system of the school. Yet both school and teachers are obliged, by the grave responsibilities which they assume, to make their efforts tend to the effective training of their pupils for after-life. To this they ought to sacrifice secondary considerations. For this they should chiefly plan and labor.

When we consider what results our Catholic education should have on the pupil and what training for life we should give to him or her, the simple but marvelously effective suggestions of the golden rule will help to a decision. We

are all grateful for the labors of those who gave us a Catholic training. We appreciate their sacrifices. We take it for granted that they did the best by us which circumstances allowed. We wish to give our own pupils everything we received from them and to go even farther if may be in training them for life as we have been trained before them.

Yet, if we wish accurately and justly to determine what it is best to do, for our own present pupils, the precious two millions of them who at this moment are receiving their training for life in Catholic schools, we should ask ourselves: What precisely should we wish to have done for us if we were just now pupils in Catholic institutions? What specific training and preparation for life should we desire to have given us at this exact time of the history of the world?

When a child leaves school he takes with him not only a certain amount of standardized information, things which scholars are supposed to know when they graduate from school, but he also takes something even more important, a whole series of habits and tastes which he has formed and acquired because of

the influence of school. The sieve of examinations and the tests of class usually reveal the degree of standardized information which he carries with him and the proficiency he has acquired in composition, mathematics, and so on. But this information and proficiency, important as they are, are not perhaps the most momentous part of his training for life. It is of even more significance for him that he has formed habits of personal study, got a taste for solid reading, gained some personal ideals of culture to take with him into the hurly-burly of life after school.

Now in the press and exactions of school life, is it not just these latter elements of education which are likely to be overlooked? To pass examinations and gain credits has come to be so important that pupils may leave school with high honors who actually have failed to acquire any considerable taste for solid reading or any personal ideals of culture which will profoundly influence their after-life.

If we were, at this time, pupils ourselves in a Catholic school and at the same time possessed of the maturity of judgment which experience of life has given us, what should we

choose ourselves as a preparation for the life before us? We should wish, of course, to be given that information and training in the usual branches which ordinarily well-educated persons are expected to possess. But it would seem very important for us to acquire also a solid taste for reading, refined ideals of culture, the inward urge to higher accomplishments which would soon lift us more and more above the level of our childish studies and would complete throughout our life the education which is only begun in the class room.

School is, after all, a transient phase in the life of a man or woman. While at school the real development of the individual is barely begun. It is impossible, from the nature of the case, to form completely the tastes and character of the student because youth is essentially a time of growth and change. The real education of the individual, the final forming of mind and heart continue much beyond the period of school and this is especially true of those, still the large majority of students, who go no farther than the end of high school or even leave off their formal education at the end of grammar school.

If a child has been impressed with tastes and ideals which will impel the growing youth to continue to read and think, to try to rise higher along the way of personal culture, to choose recreations and amusements which are elevated and instructive, to seek companionship of those who, like himself, aspire to something high and precious in life, then that child has received a benefit incomparably greater than the mere furnishing of its mind with a standardized education in the sense of credits and notes. It has been given habits and aptitudes which will work on after school is over. Its feet have been set on a road which leads upward from the door of the school to higher regions of thought and feeling, not downward as do the ways of so many who have no formed tastes or ideals of reading, into the slough of worldly and vulgar thought and principle.

Surely, then, it is of very great importance that those who are training the young generation for life should toil to implant in them a love for good reading. It is what we ourselves should wish to have received from school. The unerring instinct of our own self-interest, that laudable self-interest which leads us to desire

what is best for us, would make us wish ourselves to have received, as perhaps we did, this precious learning to read and to read what is best. The golden rule requires that we should do for our pupils what we should wish to have had done for ourselves.

Why is it so difficult to give the Catholic child of to-day a real and personal taste for a good reading? That it is a hard achievement any teacher can bear witness. It is difficult for all teachers, not for Catholic teachers alone. But as in so many other affairs, the difficulty is the measure of the necessity. The reason that it is hard nowadays to give a taste for good reading seems chiefly to be that such a taste is diametrically opposed to the spirit of the times and to resist that spirit or rather to fortify against it, is an important part of Catholic training.

The extraordinary multiplication of periodicals and books nowadays, the efforts made by highly-organized publishing agencies to spread their wares, results in a diffusion of reading matter never before equalled in the world. Everywhere one goes the book stalls, the street vendors, all the elaborate organiza-

tion for circulating print, cry out their wares. The newspapers puff indiscriminately every best seller. The department stores, the elevated and the subway, drug stores, news stands, all hawk perpetually books and magazines dressed to attract the popular taste and with illustrations, news, appeals, sensations, fit to allure the many-headed multitude.

The consequence of all this is that any man's leisure is likely to be invaded at once by some insistent newspaper, magazine, or book which everybody is reading and whose contents have therefore to be skimmed over so that one may keep up with the procession. Good books, books of enduring value, are at a terrible disadvantage in the face of such competition. These publications are intended to last but for a day and thereafter they must make way for still other newer print. No wonder their brief life is hectic and feverish.

It would seem only common sense to try to offset this perpetual forced circulation of ephemeral literature by giving to good books as constant a presence as possible and putting them about everywhere, convenient to the hand of every reader. The easier it is to get good

books, the more chance they will have to be read as against the six best sellers and the current magazines and papers. Thus it should be the constant aim of the school library to keep as many books as possible in active circulation, to wear out the books by honest use, not to preserve them in dust-proof bookcases. Not "how many books have you?" but "how many of your books are being read?" should be asked of the school librarian. The getting and reading of good books by the pupils should be facilitated in every proper way, even at the expense of the books themselves.

Pupils should also be persuaded to secure for themselves some books of their own, books which they can love and appreciate, to form the nucleus of their own library of after years. It is a more effective good work to induce a child to buy one book of its own than to give it half a dozen volumes. To own some books is the beginning of a real taste for reading. If the child conceives the ambition of having a good library of its own, there is likelihood of its realizing that ambition in future years.

There are so many ways of making books a constant presence to the child. The home

library should be attractive, interesting, and open to all comers. Teachers in schools who never inquire about the home library, never inform themselves as to whether or not the child is surrounded with the sort of books that will appeal to its growing tastes and intelligence, are somewhat like the athletic trainer who puts his team through exercises, indeed, but never inquires what sort of food they are getting or what manner of life they lead outside the training hours.

It is a legitimate interest on the part of the teacher to wish to ensure for the pupil a good supply of the right sort of reading matter. Parents who have the welfare of their children at heart, will listen to suggestions and procure for them some books suited to their inclination. This will be an advantage to the whole family, for the elders will pick up also the books which are bought for the youngsters and find them as interesting, at times, as do the students themselves.

Besides being made obligatory, subjects of study, material for examinations, the means to obtaining credits, good books ought to be presented in the amiable light of a recreation.

They ought to be offered as a refreshment, a rest from study, a means of delight. Who can say whether the custom of labeling great literture "classic" and dissecting it and chopping it up into tasks has not discouraged the constant reading of it in after years. If we had our choice, which should we keep, the tediously learned lessons in grammar and rhetoric which took up so much time in class, or those good books, devoured in leisure hours, when, perhaps, we should have been studying grammar, but turned aside to the pure joy of literature. We did not know, while we read the enchanting tale of Ivanhoe or Henry Esmond, that we were educating ourselves more effectively for after life so far as the taste for reading is concerned, than if we had been memorizing an analysis of the one or studying the paragraph structure of the other. Not that we mean to depreciate the advantages of systematic study, but rather we wish to emphasize the usefulness of the pure enjoyment of reading.

There are teachers who will take a book into class and make everyone wish to read it by giving with feeling and appreciation some enticing passages which whet the appetite for

more of the same volume. There are others who are themselves so fond of books that merely to hear them speak gives a contagious love for reading. These are indeed preparing their pupils for after-life by imparting to them a resource for every idle hour, a comfort in tribulation, a means of constant progress in thought and intelligence, a well spring of high and holy thoughts precious beyond conceiving. Of all the gifts which a worthy education can bring, of all the wholesome habits it can implant, which one, setting aside the directly supernatural virtues, can be compared for durable comfort and delight to a true taste for noble and worthy books?

X

Helping Vocations for Teaching

MORE and more, the need of a greater number of Catholic teaching Sisters forces itself upon the attention of everyone who is interested in Catholic education. Never before, according to the testimony of Catholic educators everywhere, were so many Catholic children applying for entrance into our schools. Nearly two million boys and girls are in the care of Catholic institutions of learning, primary and secondary, throughout the land. Nearly everywhere there comes as an echo of this statement the complaint that our teachers are being worn out with the burden of their task and need more and more recruits to share the work, so fruitful and so arduous, of carrying on the Catholic schools.

Thus the wonted desire which every religious has to see others come to share in the blessings of a consecrated life, is intensified by

the need of more laborers in this fruitful vineyard of the schools. From every side come prayers and wishes for an increase in vocations to the teaching Sisterhoods, and superiors, who are being besieged with requests for the opening of new schools while they can hardly supply teachers for existing ones under their care, are particularly concerned with this question of religious vocations.

Add to this that more than a million Catholic children are still of necessity outside the Catholic schools for want both of room and of teachers, and the greatness of the need becomes all the more apparent. True many of these children have parents who do not realize at all the need of Catholic education and have no wish at present to send their little ones to Catholic schools. But whether they desire it or not, the fact remains that no room exists for these children and there are no teachers to care for them. If the teachers and the schools were ready, it would be possible to shepherd many of these children in Catholic folds.

It has become, therefore, a very serious and practical question how best to encourage and foster religious vocations to the teaching Sister-

hoods. In other lines of action, as for instance in the nursing Sisterhoods, the want is quite as acute to be sure. What we shall have to say, therefore, about helping on vocations for teaching may well be applied to other religious vocations as well.

It has long been the thought of serious observers in this matter that many more of our young people have the requirements for a religious vocation than ever follow that holy way of life. In other words, many Catholic boys and girls have the call of God to become, respectively, priests, brothers or sisters but never, for one reason or other, accept His invitation and heed His summons. This is very regrettable from the standpoint of the young people themselves who miss all the merit here and the glory hereafter which faithful correspondence to such a call would ensure them. It is equally deplorable from the standpoint of the Catholic schools and therefore of the Church since their life-long service is wanted to make up the sum of holy effort in Catholic education.

On the other hand great prudence and wisdom are needed in dealing with this question of

the helping of religious vocations. Vocation is a matter between God and the soul. His divine majesty, omnipotent and all-wise, yet respects with the most perfect and delicate care, the freedom of those whom He invites to the chosen ranks of religious. Even the strongest and most clearly marked vocations are always invitations and never either compulsions or commands. God is infinitely true to His eternal decree to respect the free will of man and though His grace may mightily persuade the will with repeated invitations He never forces it nor compels any one to accept His summons to the religious state.

Still, Divine Providence works in many ways to encourage and assist those who are called to religion. The Infinite goodness provides all that is needful to those whom He summons to His special service. When we clearly understand the nature of a religious vocation and the manner in which God deals with a soul whom He is inviting to His service, we shall be better able to do our part in helping religious vocations and in seconding and co-operating with, so to say, the work of God in the soul.

It may be useful, therefore, to go over

briefly the fundamental notions of religious vocation and to recall the nature and course of the divine call, so as to discern the help which our poor efforts can give to the soul singled out for this great privilege and to see as well what would be unwise and imprudent interference on our part with the course of a vocation.

Christ, in the gospels, gives a general invitation to all who can do so to embrace the life of the counsels, which we call the religious life. "He that can take, let him take it," He says concerning the counsel of perfect chastity, and the same is to be understood of the vows of poverty and obedience. The religious life is therefore open to everyone who has the necessary qualities and good will to embrace and persevere in it. "We agree with Liguori," says Father Vermeersch, S. J., "when he declares that whoever, being free from impediment, and actuated by a right intention, is received by the superior is called to the religious life."

The doors of the religious state are open therefore very wide and anyone who has the necessary gifts of nature and grace is invited to enter therein. This general invitation

seems to us as we have often said, to bear a striking resemblance to the invitation issued by our government to all its young men to enter the army, as volunteers. Such a general invitation is always conditioned on the fitness and good will of the applicant and before allowing anyone to take the oath of a soldier and be enrolled on the lists of the army, the government requires a physical and mental examination to disclose the suitable qualities of the applicant.

In a similar way the religious vocation is open to all, on condition that they possess the requisite talents, character, and good will. The individual who wishes to accept the general invitation of Christ must first choose the religious society in which he or she wishes to serve, then make application for admittance. The superiors of the religious society have to consider whether in their judgment the applicant is suited to the work and spirit of their institute and to assure themselves that no impediments exist, exterior or interior. When they are satisfied on these points the applicant is admitted to the novitiate and if the novice

perseveres and lives her life in religion it is certain that she has a vocation.

Thus it will be seen that vocation is a matter to be settled not by feelings nor sensible inclinations, but by faith and reason. It is true that devout feelings sometimes play their part in vocation, but in general the strongest and truest vocations frequently run counter to feeling and inclination and it is only against the pull of sentiment and imagination that the novice enters and perseveres. A want of clearness on these points does much harm because it leads one to look to interior leanings and inclinations which are misleading. One might conceivably have a devout inclination to the religious life and be unfitted for it by gifts and character. On the other hand, one might be strongly averse to making the sacrifices necessary to become a religious and still have a true vocation: in actual experience, of course, the latter case is of more frequent occurrence.

The three questions to be answered by anyone who is considering whether he or she is called to religion are the following: 1. Have I the requisite qualities of body and soul to live the life of the institute I am thinking of em-

bracing? 2. Am I free from exterior hindrances such as the obligation of supporting parents, etc? 3. Have I sufficient strength of character to persevere in this holy life and the will to embrace it? If all these three questions may be answered in the affirmative then one may be sure that he or she has a religious vocation and is justified in making application for admission. The third element just mentioned, generosity of will, is the effect of the grace of God, which works in various ways. Sometimes a warm attraction is felt to the religious life. With other characters there is only a conviction of reason enlightened by faith that this is the safest and surest way for one to heaven. In either case, if the other two requirements are satisfied, one may safely enter religion.

These principles should be kept clearly in view by those who are charged with the instruction of youth and a vague or incorrect notion of vocations should be shunned in speaking to the young. The attitude of some young folk, who almost expect to be summoned by an angel to enter religion in case God wants them there, may come in part from the way in which they hear vocations spoken of. On the other

hand, if a Catholic boy or girl realizes that all that is needed for a true vocation is fitness, willingness, and the acceptance by religious superiors, it will be much easier for him or her to decide and the question of vocation will lose at least much of its agonizing uncertainty.

It should also be made clear to the children that this invitation of God leaves them free. "The path of the evangelical counsels," says Father Vermeersch again, "is in itself, open to all, and preferable for all, but without being directly or indirectly obligatory. In exceptional cases the obligation may exist as the consequence of a vow or a divine order, or of the inability (which is very rare) of not otherwise finding salvation. More frequently reasons of prudence, arising from the character and habits of the person concerned, make it unadvisable that he should choose what is in itself the best part, or duties of filial piety or justice may make it impossible."

Thus the act of following a religious vocation, of leaving the world to devote oneself entirely to the service and imitation of Christ should be represented as an act of generosity and love, helped by holy fear and inspired by

right reason and faith and not by feeling or sentiment however holy. The primary purpose of the religious life is personal sanctification and whole-hearted consecration to God—not teaching. This is the practical and true notion of a vocation and it greatly simplifies the whole subject and clarifies the decision. Give the children these ideas and cultivate in them the spirit of faith, self-sacrifice and a wish to choose for the best and use their life to the greatest advantage and you have gone far towards helping vocations.

On the contrary, a vague, incorrect way of talking about vocation as though it were a sensible and almost irresistible call, a personal message from on high, an angelic visitation, such as has been vouchsafed to a few of the saints, is rather discouraging to those young folk who, while they have every requisite of a vocation, the fitness and good will, still perceive in themselves no sensible inclination to such a sacrifice, but quite the contrary a strong and natural reluctance to leave everything and live for Christ alone.

How many a Catholic girl with an inclination to piety, with good character and talents,

who could very well enter the holy state of religion and persevere in it, teaching our precious children and forming their characters for God, has drifted on, aimlessly. She did not understand that her circumstances and the grace of God within her constituted in themselves an adequate vocation to religion, but waited for some personal sign and inward summons. Thus the years of choice pass by and find her wandering in some other path than the holy state to which fitness, good will, opportunity and the sore need of her capable help were eloquently calling her in God's name to volunteer.

This first suggestion, then, that we have to make in this matter of vocations is to give the children clear, accurate, and common sense ideas of what a vocation is and means. Some religious may be dissatisfied with what seems to them a too prosaic and matter of fact conception of a religious vocation as we have described it in the foregoing pages. Prosaic or not it is the true and practical idea.

It might be more consoling to those who have been called to religion to think that they have received a more formal invitation from

the Divine Majesty than what we have described. In some instances, they have, but it was not essential for their vocation. The generality of religious vocations come in the way we have indicated and they are made known by circumstances and the interior grace of God with or without sensible drawings or consolations. To teach the children this and to make them realize that if they are fit and able to enter religion, the following of their vocation rests with their own generosity and courage is an excellent way of helping them to heed and profit by God's holy call.

XI

Why Are There Not More Vocations?

THE question which heads this chapter is asked with increasing frequency. True, in some parts of our country vocations are many. But they are never quite numerous enough, even in the most favored sections, fully to supply the need of the teaching orders and congregations. In certain other parts of our country vocations are so infrequent that to meet the bare necessities of Catholic education those in charge of schools must bring in subjects from other regions. In other words, these localities are still for the purposes of Catholic education literally "Mission lands". All in all there is perhaps no single teaching society which will report that they have a sufficiency of members for all needs. In some instances the want of teachers is so great as actually to cripple Catholic education.

The inquiry is therefore very pertinent,—

why do not more of our Catholic students give themselves to this life of consecrated service? Recalling what was said of the real essence of a religious vocation in the preceding chapter, it becomes clear that there must be very many Catholic boys and girls who have the requisite gifts of nature and of grace to volunteer for God's service in the chosen army of Catholic educators, (and one may say the same of religious vocations in other lines of activity). There are surely many whom Providence has designated to carry on the sorely needed work of instructing and training the rising generation. The talents, disposition and circumstances of not a few of our young people, their capacity for self-sacrifice and generosity, all point to their fitness for so holy and blessed a life of devotion and service. Why then, do not more of them realize their opportunity and develop that spirit of generous correspondence to God's grace, which would lead them into our teaching communities?

It is of particular importance to the Catholic teacher to find the answer to this question, because as everyone knows, though vocation is a gift of God and a sacred matter between

the soul and its Creator, still undoubtedly the individual may be helped or hindered in this momentous choice. If our teachers knew very definitely and clearly the reason why there are not more vocations, they could in all likelihood remove obstacles and give valued aid to our young folk, who are face to face with the problem of the choice of a way of life.

What is perhaps a more serious obstacle than most persons think to the development of religious vocations, is to be found, as we observed before, in the false notions or at least imperfect ideas about the nature of vocation which are in the minds of too many of our students. Too many, even among religious teachers themselves, seem to think that a vocation is a mystic and mysterious experience, a matter of inward attraction, a speech of God to the soul, a divine pursuit of the chosen one whom God wishes to attract to His service. These things may indeed as we said before, accompany a vocation, but they are not essential for it. Vocation is a much more matter of fact affair than this in its essentials. Let us recall again the accepted theory. If a Catholic young person has all the requisite qualities of

body, mind and soul for the religious life, has a true will to embrace it and persevere in it, makes application and is received by a religious superior, then he or she has a religious vocation. To decide whether this or that individual has such a vocation means to decide whether he or she is suited to the life, has the good will to embrace it and to persevere in it and will be received by a religious congregation. If one can answer "yes" to all this, there is no need to go further. The vocation is clear.

Compare with this simple statement the manner in which vocations are sometimes spoken of. "To get a vocation," "to lose a vocation," are terms too often given a mysterious connotation as though vocations were something over and above fitness and the willingness which comes from the grace of God. No wonder real vocations are sometimes disregarded when the children expect some mysterious summons which never comes instead of being satisfied with the clear invitation of God conveyed to them by their own gifts and circumstances and by the quiet motions of divine grace within them. Catholic teachers, then, let us repeat, should above all things have

themselves and communicate to their pupils not a vague or personal notion of what vocation is, but this practical and matter of fact idea which represents the common sense notion of religious vocation.

A certain vagueness concerning the nature of vocations, may also be in part accountable for another reason which sometimes hinders the development of vocations, to-wit, a want of positive encouragement on the part of teachers and superiors, not to speak of parents and friends. We remember vividly the complaint of a young man, then lately entered into an ecclesiastical seminary, of the lack of encouragement which he had experienced in deciding upon and following out his call to the priesthood. In point of fact he had decided to be a priest only after some years spent in business life and had returned to a Catholic school with the express desire to prepare himself for the seminary. He noticed therefore, more than a less experienced scholar would have done, the extraordinary absence, as he considered it, of any allusion to the priestly vocation or even any very definite instruction as to what a religious vocation consists in or as

to how a genuine call to the priesthood may be recognized. "Father," said he, "why don't they give us more instruction about these things? Why don't they encourage us more to be generous and volunteer for God's service if we have the fitness for His work? Surely there is no subject on earth more important, and a Catholic boy has a right to learn about it thoroughly in a Catholic school. There were times," he concluded, "when I felt awfully lonesome and discouraged, because, though my teachers knew what I was there for, they seldom or never said a word about it."

Perhaps this was an altogether exceptional experience. In point of fact we have entirely forgotten what school the young man attended. Still his remark is significant because it illustrates what some more thoughtful pupils look for. To have very definite and accurate and correct ideas oneself of what a religious vocation consists in and how it is to be known and followed, and then tactfully and sensibly to convey these ideas to students, as an important part of their Catholic education, would seem to be the duty of a Catholic teacher.

Sometimes the fear of saying too much or

seeming to exert an undue influence deters Catholic teachers from mentioning the subject at all. It is well to practice a holy prudence in the matter and great care should be taken not to urge or persuade a child unduly nor to do violence to the sacred liberty of the soul in so momentous a choosing. But such imprudent excesses are easily avoided by one who realizes the importance of free and generous will for perseverance in religious life. The more clearly the teacher grasps and appreciates the exact nature of a religious call, the more free she will be in giving necessary explanations and due encouragement to the children to be generous, supernatural, and wise in their choice of a way of life.

Such right teaching about vocations will immensely simplify for those children who have the fitness and generosity for such a life the task of making up their minds and entering on their vocation. It will besides be of great profit to those others, who have not a vocation, to know precisely in what a call consists. Too many Catholics grow up with that vague, mysterious, notion that a vocation is some mystic experience, some supernatural visitation, en-

tirely beyond their experience. Thus they fail to realize the real meaning of the religious life. They consider that those of their friends and classmates who entered religion or became priests did so by some impulse or fateful moving which singled them out from the rest of mankind. Thus the moral tonic which should come to the laity from the spectacle of God's volunteers, freely giving up all things to devote themselves to His service, is in a manner lost and the stimulus to a holy life in the world which should be the result of a right idea of life in religion is weakened by these false conceptions.

It is of great importance too (and this is more likely to be overlooked), to convey to parents and relatives of Catholic children a similarly correct notion of religious life, and to encourage them also to be generous and wise in dealing with those among their children who manifest that fitness and good will which constitute the divine summons. Unreasonable opposition to religious vocation on the part of parents and friends is more often the result of ignorance than of malice. Opportunities will occur of conveying with tact and

delicacy the true ideas on this important subject. A priest, of course, can explain vocations very fully in his instructions from the pulpit. But it may be that the informal explanations of a religious teacher, appositely given when occasion arises, will sink deeper and carry even more conviction than a formal discourse from the pulpit. The departure of one of the students for the novitiate, or the ceremony of a clothing afford opportunities in this regard. If occasion is taken to give the right explanation of the following of a vocation as the generous volunteering to consecrate oneself entirely to God, and if the signs of a vocation are described clearly and accurately as the fitness and good will, the result of God's Providence and graces, to embrace this life of the counsels, then for the laity also, the whole subject will be greatly clarified.

But if remarks are made about "getting a vocation" and "losing a vocation" as though a vocation were like a personal ticket, somehow slipped into the hand of the chosen child, without throwing light upon the real elements of the call to religion, then lay folk will conceive but an imperfect idea and may be disposed

afterwards to resist the wish of their children to follow a call of whose nature they know so little. When the time comes, too, for announcing to the family the decision to become a religious, much may depend on the manner in which this announcement is made. To say, "I wish to go to the convent, because I feel that I have a vocation" leaves a reasonable doubt as to what this feeling consists in, how well it is grounded and how long it will last. It is much more accurate and effective to say, "I feel sure, from prudent advice and my own best judgment, that I am suited to the religious life. Its excellence makes me desire it. My happiness here and hereafter and the best service of God and my neighbor, await me there. I wish to be generous and wise and give myself entirely to God."

We do not mean, in what has been said, to place the blame for a less number of religious vocations than might have been expected upon our Catholic teachers. Nothing of the kind. We only wish to indicate how they might perhaps do even more than at present in encouraging their pupils who have vocations to carry out God's great designs upon them. One

most important means of doing this will evidently be the right information and encouragement of their pupils. Where they are now doing all that is possible in this regard, well and good. If something can still be added to their present fruitful efforts, it should by all means be attempted. As to the means and methods of this instruction and encouragement and as to the occasions for its imparting these may all be left to the tact and good will of our teachers themselves. It is well known how anxious they all are to do everything in their power both to bring to others the blessings of the religious life which they so appreciate for themselves and to supply more and more, the increasing need of teachers for our Catholic schools.

XII

The Call of God and the Call of the World

IN a certain sense, every following out of a religious vocation is a sort of moral miracle. No one is more aware of this than the person concerned. Looking back over the days of pondering and decision, the parting from family and friends, the experiences of the novitiate, the perseverance afterwards, there is no religious who will not frankly avow that all this was a matter quite above his or her unaided strength and resolution and that the force to accomplish it must have come from on high. Considering our human weakness, the force of natural ties, the allurements of the world's quite genuine attractions and the fact that correspondence with a religious vocation is not a matter of duty nor necessity, but of generosity and divine love, it is a wonder that our poor human nature can

rise to such fortitude as it displays in embracing the religious life.

Yet withal the whole process of correspondence to God's grace is perfectly free. However strong the grace of vocation may be, it never forces the will. In fact it is most probable that too many vocations, as true and definite as could be desired, go unrealized for want of the requisite will on the part of those who have been favored with the divine call of fitness, opportunity, and the movings of interior grace. Vocations which have been accepted might have been freely refused. On the other hand, those which have been refused might, with greater generosity and good will, have been accepted. Indeed many rejected vocations may have been stronger and better defined than certain of those which have been followed to the end.

Clearly, then, much aid may be given to those who are called to the religious life. Many obstacles may be diminished or removed for them. In previous articles we have touched briefly on some of these obstacles and the means to dissipate them. Let us look a bit into another stumbling block of great practical

importance and difficulty. This is to be found in the attractiveness of the world. It was perhaps never more serious an obstacle to the religious life than at present. It threatens not to diminish but constantly to increase in its power and appeal. We must reckon with it constantly. Perhaps more than any other one thing it must bear the blame where religious vocations are growing fewer among our Catholic young folk.

Life in the world was, we may venture to say, never more interesting, various, appealing, than it is now and in our country. There have been epochs in history where the few lived a more full and rounded life than do the many to-day. The men of the renaissance who could profit by its youthful exuberance of life, artistic and intellectual, had a more interesting and colorful existence than we. But they were comparatively small in number and those who were happy enough to preserve moderation and contentment in the midst of their plenty were fewer still. So too, in the middle ages life was richer and deeper than ours in the poetry of religious ceremony and social brotherhood. The various interests of guilds

and community festivals, of mystery plays and religious ceremonies gave life a tranquil variety which made men content. But for speed and facility of communication, which bring the news of all the world to every man's door, for diversity of amusement which puts a thousand entertainments within the reach even of the poor, for multiplied opportunities for rising in the world and bettering one's station, for startling discoveries, any one of which, like the automobile, the moving picture, or the heavier-than-air flying machine can change to a degree the face of civilization, our age is unique and wonderful.

Even a young child senses something of this various interest and appeal of modern life and is swept along to a degree by the current of distraction and self indulgence to which so many opportunities for pleasure and play and recreation are sure to give rise. There have been states of society when the change from the home to the cloister was scarcely sensible. In those peaceful and pious days a Catholic family might live in religious simplicity, with few distractions, much labor and no amusements save the very simple pastimes of an

evening about the family hearth. Contrast those days with our own and you will be able the better to estimate how much greater a sacrifice of distractions, amusements and pleasures the Catholic youth must nowadays make to enter religion.

Add to this that the interest and color of life, such as it is, is no longer confined to the homes of the rich and the great, but has become a general atmosphere of society penetrating everywhere, even into poor quarters of cities and lonely rural homes. We are so used to finding everywhere the facilities for amusement, information, communication, that we scarcely realize how different the world is in this respect from, let us say, even fifty years ago. Then the railroad and the telegraph had indeed transformed society to a certain degree, but the multiplied distractions of modern city and country life, which we are familiar with, had in great part still to be developed. There were no automobiles to lure the folk out over the face of the land and widen a man's daily range from a few miles to a county's breadth. Now, the automobile industry has passed all the others and is the greatest in the land, above

iron, oil, or coal. Then, no moving pictures had been heard of. Now it is said that in our country alone, eighteen thousand theatres show them each day to some twelve million people. Then the multiplicity of magazines, the bulky newspaper, the radio, the all-present telephone did not exist as now. To leave the world in those days did not mean so much as in these—there was not so much to leave!

Our children are in the midst of these things from their infancy. Even the less well-to-do have an abundance of such distractions. To go out of nights, to see, to hear, to enjoy, to experience, to be stirred and excited, to be interested, and amused, is as much part of their ordinary existence as of that of their elders. No wonder then, that some of them wince and turn away when the divine invitation is brought home to them to leave all things and follow Christ. Add to this the general liberty and relative independence given to our children and the case becomes yet more clear. Whatever we may think of the expediency of such methods of upbringing, it is simply obvious how much more freedom, how much less formal obedience, enters into the life of a child

now than fifty years ago. To enter religion means not only poverty and chastity but obedience,—not only mortification, but submission. Neither the one nor the other is precisely agreeable to the spirit of these times with which the children no less than their elders are of necessity colored and imbued.

"Father," said a young priest, who had recently come over from Europe, "I do not think that people over here quite realize how much more it means for a young man to follow a vocation to the priesthood here than it did where I was born. There, life was so simple, so humdrum, so uneventful, and unattractive compared to what it is here that it was not nearly so hard to give it all up and go to the seminary as I should think it would be here. The change was not so very great from the boarding school where I spent my younger days to the seminary. There were not such opportunities with us, for a secular career. Here it must be terrifically hard in comparison to quit it all, all the interest, color, chances of life, and devote everything to Christ. I have great respect," he finished, "for the young men who become priests in the United States."

If this is true of those who become priests how thoroughly it must apply also to the ones who follow a religious vocation. Nor do these reflections hold less nowadays for women than for men. In older times woman was a home keeping body, and to go from the quiet of the home to that of the cloister did not mean so great a change as now. But in our time girls and young women have the freedom of boys and men. We must take all these things into account when thinking of the reasons for fewer vocations and the means of promoting and encouraging them.

Against all this attractiveness of the world what remedy and antidote have we to offer? The best, it seems, is the oldest—the spirit of supernatural generosity and self-sacrifice. The more we can cultivate this spirit in our young folk the more they will be ready and able to surrender for Christ's love all the allurements of the world were they ten times more delightful and attractive. It is the spirit of generous self-sacrifice, based on fair love and holy fear, which will fortify those whom God calls to His service to turn deaf ears to the call of the world.

If we wish to develop vocations therefore, we should aim constantly at cultivating in our pupils a supernatural outlook upon the world. We should teach them that splendid sanity of judgment which while making all due allowance for the loveliness and charm of earth, (which reflects though faintly the uncreated beauty, Who made it,) looks always beyond, to the goal of life's pilgrimage and estimates the things of time by the standards of eternity. The Catholic viewpoint, which is the supernatural viewpoint, cannot be too deeply impressed upon all our students nor too clearly brought home to them. Whether they have a vocation or not it is of supreme moment that they should understand the meaning of life and of time and of life's goods in the light of eternity.

This viewpoint is of course impressed strongly upon the children during times of retreat. This does not suffice. It should insensibly permeate all the teaching of the entire year,—not being forced upon them crudely but made to color their whole mental atmosphere. In this connection few things are more important than the right teaching of literature.

Real Catholic literature is permeated with the supernatural. The literature of the world, when not frankly pagan, too often insinuates worldly maxims and judgments to such an extent as to chill and warp the generous enthusiasm of young hearts for unworldly self-sacrifice.

We should make our education very Catholic. This may seem a strange remark. But when one considers the prevalence of the worldly spirit, the pressure brought on Catholic schools to teach non-Catholic authors, the stress of competition with a non-religious educational system, the over-work and distraction of the teacher, there is sometimes reason to fear lest the atmosphere of a Catholic class room should be in effect less favorable to the development of this supernatural generosity than we might wish.

Besides this general care to inculcate the supernatural spirit, we should take very definite measures to introduce into the training of our schools some exercises of generosity and self-sacrifice. The Sodality, with its indefinitely great possibilities of developing sections for the help of the missions, of Cath-

olic literature, of poor children and so on, affords a very efficacious means of training the pupils in this disposition to make sacrifices for the love of Christ and His Blessed Mother. If the Sodalities in schools were properly organized and conducted so as to make them training schools in generous fervor, the number of vocations corresponded with would rise notably in a little time. This is not mere theory, it is the actual experience of zealous directors. "The Sodality" remarked a religious superior to me not long ago, "is a wonderful means of developing vocations. We had great difficulty in getting novices here and I did not know what to do. Then I began to work very earnestly with the Sodality and to make it a real school of zeal and fervor. Look at this picture of our group of novices. Nearly every one of them owes the spirit of fervor and self-sacrifice necessary for following a vocation to the inspiration of a fervent Sodality."

GARESCHE, ED. F. 44112

AUTHOR

Training for Life

TITLE

DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME	ROOM NUMBER
	Kilp	
	J Murray	
	Shatek	
	Sullivan	
	Stump	

STORAGE - CBPL

44112